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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
WILLIAM COWPER

EDITED BY
THE REV ROBERT ARIS WILLMOTT
INCUMBENT OF BEAR WOOD

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THE BRITISH POETS

In crown 8vo, cloth,
Uniform with this Volume,

SHAKSPEARE.

MILTON

BYRON

SCOTT

MOORE.

POPE.

BURNS

SHELLEY

KEATS

COLERIDGE

HOOD

HEMANS.

TO

F B CHARLTON, ESQ.,

OF CHILWELL HALL, NOTTINGHAM,

THESE POEMS OF A TRUE ENGLISHMAN

Are Inscribed

BY R A WILLMOTT



PREFACE.

THIS Volume contains all the original Poems of Cowper, except the Olney Hymns, it includes, also, the translations from Milton, Vincent Bourne, Madame Guyon, and some miscellaneous Authors. The Text has been revised with care. Cowper was extremely watchful in preserving the measure of his verse, particularly distinguishing the dactyle from the spondee, with that view he introduced very frequent elisions, which his later Editors seem, with one consent, to have erased. These are now restored. The punctuation of the Poems presents many difficulties. "I know no use of points," Cowper wrote to Mr Unwin, "unless to direct the voice," and his own inclination led him to claim for the author an authority quite independent of the grammarian. A man of fine taste may, indeed, regulate the inflection, the cadence, and the pause by the instinct of his own ear, but the general reader requires some distinctive guides. In the present

Volume I have endeavoured to supply them. The number and the length of the Poems prevented me from inserting many critical remarks, but the foot-notes are numerous, and will be found, I hope, illustrative of the Poet. The introductory notice of Cowper is designed for a picture-sketch of his life and genius.

S^t Catherine's, Bear Wood,

October 9, 1854

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WILLIAM COWPER.

HERTFORDSHIRE, though according to Fuller it is the garden of England for delight, has never shown much bloom or fruit in literature, and its fair places, courts, halls, and manors embalm few great names in history or learning. But the pastoral house of Great Berkhamstead did give to it one Werthy in WILLIAM COWPER, born November 26, 1731. His father, the second son of a Judge of the Common Pleas, was Rector of the parish, and Chaplain to George the Second. The walnut-tree and the elms of the parsonage have long been cut down, and we know not whether the sacrilege was visited by the misfortune, which Evelyn affirms to have always followed such an act. Like his two most attached and distinguished friends—Hayley and Newton—Cowper was blessed with an admirable mother, whose love he has for ever recorded. Her sweet face confirms the praise of her son, who lost her two days before the completion of his sixth year. Her death very speedily bore bitter fruit. The morning task of the “gardener Robin” was over, and the sorrowing child was placed in the school of Dr Pitman at Market-street, a town which has the singular fortune of being divided between Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. There Cowper spent two years of misery in mind and body. The wrench alone might have left so tender and clinging a spirit wounded and bleeding, but a special affliction awaited him in a boy older than himself, and greedy, as well as curious, in the brutalities which he worked. The school-fellows were at length separated, the bully by expulsion, and the victim by removal. Cowper was now entrusted to the care of an oculist, in whose house he abode for two

years, not without some alleviation of his complaint, but a subsequent attack of the small pox seems to have been a successfuller medicine to his eyes

At ten years of age we find Cowper settled at Westminster School. Those early days of his life are not to be judged by the sombre colours in which he afterwards portrayed them. He shared the amusements of his companions, and was great at foot-ball and cricket. But the "coming event" of his manhood already began to throw forward a little shadow, in low spirits, a chilling sense of personal guilt, and a dread of incipient consumption. There was much to brace him in the air of the place. Westminster had never sheltered a more promising growth of genius, since Dryden sat under the ferule of Busby. Foremost on the list we see Churchill, older than Cowper by a few months, Hastings, presently to shine among the lights of our Eastern Empire, Cumberland, Lloyd, Thornton, Colman, and others not yet forgotten. A public school has seldom much of the "dim religious light" to solemnize the young mind, but Westminster did not lag behind its rivals, and perhaps we may read in the following verses a proof that the Master's religious preparation had not been entirely fruitless —

To Babylon's proud waters brought,
In bondage where we lay,
With tears on Sion's Hill we thought,
And sigh'd our hours away,
Neglected on the willows hung
Our useless harps, while every tongue
Bewail'd the fatal day

Then did the base insulting foe
Some joyous notes demand,
Such as in Sion used to flow
From Judah's happy band
Alas! what joyous notes have we,
Our country spoiled, no longer free,
And in a foreign land!

O Solyma! if e'er thy praise
Be silent in my song,
✓ Rude and displeasing be thy lays
! And artless be my tongue!

Thy name my fancy still employs,
To thee, great fountain of my joys,
My sweetest nurs belong

Remember, Lord! that hostile sound,
When Edom's children cried,
"Razed be her turrets to the ground,
And humbled be her pride!"
Remember, Lord! and let the foe
The terrors of thy vengeance know,
The vengeance they dehed!

Thou, too, great Babylon, shalt fall
A victim to our God,
Thy monstrous crimes already call
For heaven's chastising rod
Happy who shall thy little ones
Relentless dash against the stones,
And spread their limbs abroad

Cowper was eighteen years old when he left Westminster, to pass some months with his father at the old rectory. His new home was in the house of Mr Chapman, an attorney in London, to whom he was articled, his fellow-clerk being the future Lord Chancellor Thurlow. The poet's uncle, Mr Ashley Cowper, lived in Southampton-row, and there the two clerkly friends were constantly to be found "giggling and making giggle," the establishment of Mr. Chapman being regarded only as a place of sleep, after the entertainment of the day. It was upon one of these occasions that Cowper startled the company with a hypothetical petition to the Chancellor that was to be — "Thurlow, I am nobody, and shall always be nobody, you will be Chancellor, you shall provide for me when you are." Thurlow readily gave a promise, and repeated it twice. How he kept it, the readers of the poet are well informed. It was not a singular case. He had engaged to make Eldon a Commissioner of Bankrupts, and when, in later years he was reminded of his broken assurance, he told his then prosperous brother in the law, that he had disappointed him only to make him work.

But Southampton-row had a particular charm for one of these gigglers, in the handsome face and lively temper of

his cousin, Theodora Jane Cowper It was at this period that Cowper wrote the playful stanzas on "Himself"—

WILLIAM was once a bashful youth,
 His modesty was such,
 That one might say (to say the truth)
 He rather had too much.
 Some said that it was want of sense,
 And others want of spirit,
 (So blest a thing is impudence,
 While others could not bear it.
 But some a different notion had,
 And, at each other winking,
 Observed, that though he little said,
 He paid it off with thinking
 Howe'er it happened, by degrees,
 He mended and grew pertier,
 In company was more at ease,
 And dressed a little smarter,
 Nay, now and then would look quite gay,
 As other people do,
 And sometimes said, or tried to say,
 A witty thing or so
 He eyed the women, and made free
 To comment on their shapes,
 So that there was, or seemed to be,
 No fear of a relapse
 The women said, who thought him rough,
 But now no longer foolish,
 "The creature may do well enough,
 But wants a deal of polish"
 At length, improved from head to heel,
 'Twere scarce too much to say,
 No dancing bear was so genteel,
 Or half so *dégage*
 Now that a miracle so strange
 May not in vain be shown,
 Let the dear maid who wrought the change
 E'en claim him for her own.

A letter of Hayley to John Johnson, May 15, 1814, enables us satisfactorily to identify the lady to whom these lines were addressed — "The attractive composition '*William was once,*' could not be printed without a violation of my word of honour, for when the kind T—— sent

them to me, I promised that I would keep them secret and sacred, as was wished, and never print unless I happened to be the survivor”

Cowper was called to the “Bar” in 1754, but his studies led him along more flowery paths. In the meanwhile, Thurlow struggled up the difficult rock, making sure of every step in the ice, as he cut it, for he was haunted by no “Delia,” darting bewildering gleams over Coke and Littleton. The stream of love soon ran roughly in Southampton-row. It was in the year 1755 that the hopes of the cousins began to decline. The father of the lady opposed the union, and was not to be shaken by argument or entreaty. The parting hour came, and the lovers never saw one another again.

On Cowper the shock was faint and transitory, he had the wit of the Temple to fall back upon, and in the early spring of 1756 he recovered sufficient gaiety to banter old bachelors in the pages of the “Connoisseur,” and to set forth the pleasant mischiefs of Miss Diana Grizzle, who utterly spoiled the only suit of a poor celibate by pinning the skirts of it together with a red-hot poker. It may be doubted if Cowper’s love for his cousin had ever ripened into any feeling, richer and more glowing than the admiration of an affectionate and rather changeable temperament. “I still look back,” he told Lady Hesketh, in mature life, “to the memory of your sister, and regret her, but how strange it is, if we were to meet now, we should not know each other.” Did a love, worthy of the name, ever think or speak thus? How much truer to the heart is the picture of Edith, in the “Tahsman,” holding her silver lamp over the black face of the disguised Nubian, as if to peruse his features, then placing it that it might throw the shadow of the face in profile upon the curtain which hung beside her in the tent, and at length, speaking in a voice composed yet deeply sorrowful — “Is it you? Is it indeed you, brave Knight of the Leopard?” Memory has its own lamp, fed with aromatic oil, and bright enough to pierce *

darker cloud than the skill of Saladin shed over the Scottish knight Theodora would have known William Nothing in the history of poets is more touching than her tenderness and faith Unseen she watched, and cherished, and cheered the beloved of her youth, now she increased his comforts by an enclosure of money, at another time, she pleased him by some elegant gift "Dear Anonymous," he exclaimed, "is come again" But Southampton-row must have faded in thick shadow, when he breathed a grateful prayer for his benefactor, and said "*God bless him!*" How could he unpack the parcel and take out the snuff box of tortoiseshell, with the familiar landscape on the lid of it, and the figures of the three hares, and read "The Peasant's Rest," and the names of "Tiney," "Puss," and "Bess," without being sure that only womanly tenderness could have shown itself with such delicacy and grace

We left Cowper in the Temple, cheating time with a hasty sketch in prose or verse, teaching the art of keeping a secret, and turning an ode from Horace or a motto from Terence into pleasant metro Moreover, the "Nonsenso Club" was in all its glory, and with one of its members, Joseph Hill, the Sephus of his earlier letters, he maintained an intercourse through life The drudgery of the office had not yet chilled the literary taste and romance of the young lawyer, who delighted to waste a summer's day in reading Tasso's "Jerusalem," or the "Pastor Fido," on a mouldering wall by the sea shore Cowper's literary fire would be kept alive by the wants and the fame of his associates Lloyd enlisted his sympathy, and Churchill inflamed his ambition That remarkable person was then stunning the public ear with his "giddy larum" of rhyme Cowper might be offended by his life, but he was an enthusiast in the praise of his genius He had the feeling in common with his contemporaries Goldsmith's "Traveller" was only regarded as a star that began to shine after the sun was gone down, and Walpole informs

us of a namesake of the poet who being asked by a Frenchman if he were *le fameux poëte*, and, answering in the negative, was greeted with the complimentary exclamation "*Ma foi, Monsieur, tant pis pour vous*"

This Temple-life was more easy than profitable to a man in his thirty-second year, and just at the period when his means were sinking to a very low ebb, Fortune seemed to shine out upon him with all her lustre. His kinsman, Major Cowper, called at the poet's chambers, and requesting him to take a turn in the garden, offered him the office of Reading Clerk, and of Clerk of the Committees, in the House of Lords. Cowper had scarcely accepted the appointment, when, in his own words, "he seemed to receive a dagger in his heart." A change of the richer post for the humbler one of Clerk of the Journals, in some measure healed the wound. But sharper pangs were in store. His kinsman's right of presentation was disputed, and the prospect of a public and hostile examination of his own competency quite overset the judgment of the poet. Troubled by day, sleepless by night, a perpetual fever wasted his spirits, as he pored upon the journals with a dizzy brain, in the search of the information which he needed. About the middle of August, 1763, he obtained a short respite from his agony in a visit to Margate, but the good effects of the holiday vanished in the renewed investigations of October. He now found himself in a strait betwixt two difficulties,—the retaining of the office until the last minute, or the immediate resignation of it. Fearful were his struggles in his lonely chambers, sometimes bursting forth into loud cries of anguish and wrath. The tempest was coming up swift with the wind. He saw no escape from the trial that he dreaded, except in madness or suicide. His own pen has written the dreadful tale. It was on a dark November evening of that fatal "'63," that he entered a chemist's shop, and with a tranquil voice and look, requested to have a half-ounce phial of laudanum. He obtained it, and

Selecting from its fallen sisters, chase
Far from its native grove, to lifeless waste,
And leave it there alone to be forgotten
Eternally God passed in mercy by,—
His praise be ever new! and on him breathed,
And bade him live, and put into his hands
A holy harp, into his lips a song,
That rolled its numbers down the tide of Time
Ambitious now but little to be praised
Of men alone, ambitious most, to be
Approved of God, the Judge of all, and have
His name recorded in the book of life.

The recovery began with a visit of his brother from Cambridge, July 25, 1764, he only stayed one day, but it was blessed of God to the restoring of the sufferer. The brothers went together into the garden, and as they walked, William spoke of the sudden judgment that awaited him, John declared the fear to be only a delusion, and his assurances were so vehement, that they arrested the attention of his companion, who, bursting into tears, exclaimed "If it be a delusion, then I am the happiest of beings." This was the first shine of the bow in the cloud. He slept well that night, and awoke a new creature. Not long afterwards, being again in the garden, and finding a Bible on a seat, he opened it and read the history of Lazarus. The tomb of Bethany brought tender thoughts, and his reviving hopes grew daily, as mercy, peace, and love streamed in upon him from the Cross, seen in its beauty and power.

Cowper prolonged his sojourn with Dr. Cotton for a year after his recovery, and when it became expedient to choose some new abode, his brother suggested Huntingdon as a convenient situation. On the 7th of June, 1765, he quitted St. Albans, with a grateful heart, and deeply in debt to his "little physician." From Cambridge to Huntingdon the distance is fifteen miles, and the brothers visited each other in alternate weeks. The servant, who nursed the poet in his long sorrow, accompanied him to his new home. He had not long occupied his

lodgings, when he was invited to exchange them for the roof of a family, whose names he has married to his own verse for ever. There lived in the High-street of Huntingdon, "in a genteel way," and "in a special good house," a clergyman, the Rev Morley Unwin, who prepared a few pupils for the University. His proper sphere of duty was at Grimstone, Norfolk, of which he was the Incumbent, but he had a lively wife, and the vicarage was dull. To please her he returned to Huntingdon, where he had formerly been lecturer. Cowper describes the family to Lady Hesketh, September 14, 1765 — "The last acquaintance I made here is with the race of the Unwins, consisting of father and mother, son and daughter, the most comfortable, social folks you ever knew. The son is about twenty-one years of age, one of the most unreserved and amiable young men I ever conversed with." The daughter "was eighteen, rather handsome, and genteel." The father was a Parson Adams, and his wife as polite as a duchess. It appears to have been about September, 1765, that the intimacy commenced with the Unwins, and in the February of the following year Cowper was admitted a member of their interesting circle. The motherly feeling of Mrs Unwin very quickly showed itself, for we find him informing Hill that she knitted all his stockings, and would have knitted his hats, if she had been able. The peace of these brethren, dwelling together in so much unity, was suddenly broken by the death of Mr Unwin, who sustained a fracture of the skull, by a fall from his horse, July, 1767. The accident only affected Cowper's place of abode, and while it was yet undetermined, Mr Newton, in passing through Huntingdonshire, paid a visit to Mrs Unwin. Being then curate of Olney, in Buckinghamshire, he proposed his own parish as a desirable home, and his suggestion proving acceptable, the two friends, henceforth to be put asunder only by death, fixed their habitation in a house which Mr Newton provided for them, October 14, 1767.

The history of Newton is well known. He was then about forty-two years of age, a warm hearted, vigorous, earnest man, with a dash of peremptoriness that brought back the stormier days of the slave. His character had several features likely to attract the regard of Cowper. He was a poet in his love of nature. A fine landscape gave him intense delight. It had been his habit, whenever he found an opportunity, to say his prayers in the open air, on the hill top, or under the shade of trees. His temper, too, was quick and fanciful, not disinclined to superstition, but regulated by a very clear and powerful understanding. It were vain to deny the excellence of such a man, yet it may be fairly doubted if he did not cause irreparable injury to Cowper. I do not mean either by his conversation or his doctrine. Newton, in the happy phrase which has been applied to him, was not a sulphureous preacher, continually looking out a new word in the diabolical dictionary, although his pulpit had got an ill name for disordering the minds of the parish. Southey has indicated the true seat of the mischief in the system of spiritual excitement, which he kept up with untiring perseverance, the sermon, the prayer meeting, the lecture, the exposition, the visit, each followed the other with a perplexing and incessant rapidity, that made the heart's yoke painful, and its burden heavy. Newton suffered nothing from his work, in former years he had been exposed on the shelterless deck, with no clothing but a shirt, a pair of drawers, and a handkerchief round his head, to the rain and wind for forty hours. His robust frame defied fatigue. It was otherwise with Cowper. Never did the man live to whom excitement was more perilous. He had been heard to confess, that when he expected to take the lead in a prayer-meeting, his mind was always greatly agitated for some hours preceding it. The tremor might die with the first words he uttered, but the effect remained. What a temperament for a lay

curate! Four days in the week the friends constantly passed together, allotting the time after this manner—dinner at one, tea three hours later, and a lecture, or some religious exercise, which lasted until supper. The summer walk was entirely lost by such an arrangement, and the mind enjoyed no calm.

Bacon was surely wiser, when he advised people in search of health to entertain a variety of delights, rather than a pursuit of them, and studies that fill the understanding with splendid and illustrious objects.

The death of the poet's brother, in 1770, was a calamity of which the effects were soon apparent. If Mr. Newton had deserved the praise of being able to draw a hair-stroke, where another man would make a blot as large as a sixpence, we should not have found him recommending to such a sufferer the composition of the Olney Hymns. Cowper had not proceeded far in the work, before his afflicting disorder returned with extreme violence.

Oh! who can tell what days, what nights he spent
Of tideless, waveless, sailless, shoreless woe

It was now that the devoted tenderness of his second mother obtained a task worthy of it. "What," wrote Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, nearly fifty years afterwards, "but sensibility of the purest, highest kind, led her to do and suffer, in the cause of friendship, more than ever the courage of man or the love of woman achieved? Dying for one's friend was nothing to this. Estranged from all social enjoyments, and having one's sole attention tied down, day after day, and year after year, to the most painful object that heart can conceive—the ghastly form and suspended faculties of a dear friend! How much beyond the conception of ordinary minds was the tenderness, the constancy, the fortitude, and, above all, the faith of this blessed woman! Lady Hesketh, the good, the generous, the amiable, tried to fill her place, but sank under it. Miss Fanshawe who was with Lady H. in the

last months of her life, told me that she never recovered the miserable winter she spent with her beloved cousin "1

When the wheels of thought began to move again, some employment was wanted that might occupy, without oppressing, the mind of the poet, and he found it in the domestication of his three hares. Cowper's love of animals had been a feature of his boyish character. At Westminster he kept a tame mouse in his "bureau," and rejoiced in the appearance of six mice, but going one morning to visit the enlarged family, he discovered that the maternal mouse had devoured it, and turning her loose in his wrath, he banished the tribe for ever from his sympathies. In future days he met with kinder specimens of the mute creation. Long is the catalogue of his rabbits, cats, magpie, squirrels, pigeons, starling, jay, goldfinches, canary birds, and robins. His spaniel Beau is preserved in rhyme. "Shock" was hardly guarded with more sollicitudo by Ariol. A poet's hand alone might comb his ears, or pick out the burrs which he caught from the thickets in the grassy walks about Weston. But the story of the hares should be read by itself, in the author's own words, it might be bound up with Cowley's essay "Of Myself"—

In the year 1774, being much indisposed both in mind and body, incapable of diverting myself either with company or books, and yet in a condition that made some diversion necessary, I was glad of anything that would engage my attention, without fatiguing it. The children of a neighbour of mine had a leveret given them for a plaything: it was at that time about three months old. Understanding better how to tease the poor creature than to feed it, and soon becoming weary of their charge, they readily consented that their father, who saw it pining and growing leaner every day, should offer it to my acceptance. I was willing enough to take the prisoner under my protection, perceiving that, in the management of such an animal, and in the attempt to tame it, I should find just that sort of employment which my case required. It was soon known among the neighbours that I was pleased with the present, and the consequence was, that in a short time I had as many leverets offered to me as would have stocked a paddock. I undertook the care of three, which it is necessary that I should here

1 "Correspondence of Mrs Grant," iii. 25

distinguish by the names I gave them—Puss, Tiney, and Bess. Notwithstanding the two feminine appellatives, I must inform you, that they were all males. Immediately commencing carpenter, I built the three houses to sleep in, each had a separate apartment, so contrived that their entrance would pass through the bottom of it, an earthen pan placed under each received whatsoever fell, which being duly emptied and washed, they were thus kept perfectly sweet and clean. In the daytime they had the range of a hall, and at night retired each to his own bed, never intruding into that of another.

Puss grew presently familiar, would leap into my lap, raise himself up on his hinder feet, and bite the hair from my temples. He would suffer me to take him up, and to carry him about in my arms, and has more than once fallen fast asleep upon my knee. He was all three ways, during which time I nursed him, kept him apart from his fellows, that they might not molest him (for, like many other wild animals, they persecute one of their own species that is sick), and he constant care, and trying him with a variety of herbs, restored him to perfect health. No creature could be more grateful than my patient after his recovery, a sentiment which he most signally expressed by licking my hand, first the back of it, then the palm, then every finger separately, then between all the fingers, as if anxious to have no part of it unsalted, a ceremony which he never performed but once again upon a similar occasion. Finding him extremely tractable, I made it my custom to carry him always after breakfast into the garden, where he hid himself generally under the leaves of a cucumber vine, sleeping or chowing the cud till evening, in the leaves also of that vine he found a favourite retreat. I had not long habituated him to this taste of liberty, before he began to be impatient for the return of the time when he might enjoy it. He would invite me to the garden by drumming upon my knee, and by a look of such expression as it was not possible to misinterpret. If this rhetoric did not immediately succeed, he would take the skirt of my coat between his teeth, and pull it with all his force. Thus Puss might be said to be perfectly tamed, the shyness of his nature was done away, and on the whole it was visible by many symptoms, which I have not room to enumerate, that he was happier in human society than when shut up with his natural companions.

Not so Tiney, upon him the kindest treatment had not the least effect. He too was sick, and in his sickness had an equal share of my attention; but if, after his recovery, I took the liberty to stroke him, he would grunt, stifle with his fore feet, spring forward, and bite. He was, however, very entertaining in his way, even his squintings was matter of mirth, and in his play he preserved such an air of gravity, and performed his feats with such a solemnity of manner, that in him too I had an agreeable companion.

Bess, who died soon after he was full grown, and whose death was occasioned by his being turned into his box, which had been

washed, while it was yet damp, was a hare of great humour and drollery. Puss was tamed by gentle usage, Tiney was not to be tamed at all, and Bess had a courage and confidence that made him tame from the beginning. I always admitted them into the parlour after supper, when, the carpet affording their feet a firm hold, they would frisk, and bound, and play a thousand gambols, in which Bess, being remarkably strong and fearless, was always superior to the rest, and proved himself the Vestris of the party. One evening, the cat being in the room, had the hardness to pat Bess upon the cheek, an indignity which he resented by drumming upon her back with such violence that the cat was happy to escape from under his paws, and lude herself.

I describe these animals as having each a character of his own. Such they were in fact, and their countenances were so expressive of that character, that, when I looked only on the face of either, I immediately knew which it was. It is said that a shepherd, however numerous his flock, soon becomes so familiar with their features, that he can, by that indication only, distinguish each from all the rest, and yet, to a common observer, the difference is hardly perceptible. I doubt not that the same discrimination in the cast of countenances would be discoverable in hares, and am persuaded that among a thousand of them no two could be found exactly similar. A circumstance little suspected by those who have not had opportunity to observe it. These creatures have a singular sagacity in discovering the minutest alteration that is made in the place to which they are accustomed, and instantly apply their nose to the examination of a new object. A small hole being burnt in the carpet, it was mended with a patch, and that patch in a moment underwent the strictest scrutiny. They seem to be very much directed by the smell in the choice of their favourites. To some persons, though they saw them daily, they could never be reconciled, and would even scream when they attempted to touch them, but a miller coming in engaged their affections at once, his powdered coat had charms that were irresistible. It is no wonder that my intimate acquaintance with these specimens of the kind has taught me to hold the sportsman's amusement in abhorrence, he little knows what amiable creatures he persecutes, of what gratitude they are capable, how cheerful they are in their spirits, what enjoyment they have of life, and that, impressed as they seem with a peculiar dread of man, it is only because man gives them peculiar cause for it.

That I may not be tedious, I will just give a short summary of those articles of diet that suit them best.

I take it to be a general opinion that they graze, but it is an erroneous one, at least, grass is not their staple, they seem rather to use it medicinally, soon quitting it for leaves of almost any kind. Sowthistle, dandelion, and lettuce are their favourite vegetables, especially the last. I discovered by accident that fine white sand is in great estimation with them. I suppose as a digestive. It

happened, that I was cleaning a birdcage when the hares were with me, I placed a pot filled with such sand upon the floor, which, being at once directed to it by a strong instinct, they devoured voraciously, since that time I have generally taken care to see them well supplied with it. They account green corn a delicacy, both blade and stalk, but the ear they seldom eat. Straw of any kind, especially wheat-straw, is another of their dainties. They will feed greedily upon oats, but if furnished with clean straw never want them, it serves them also for a bed, and, if shaken up daily, will be kept sweet and dry for a considerable time. They do not indeed require aromatic herbs, but will eat a small quantity of them with great relish, and are particularly fond of the plant called musk: they seem to resemble sheep in this, that, if their pasture be too succulent, they are very subject to the rot, to prevent which, I always made bread their principal nourishment, and, filling a pan with it cut into small squares, placed it every evening in their chambers, for they feed only at evening and in the night, during the winter, when vegetables were not to be got, I mingled this mess of bread with shreds of carrot, adding to it the rind of apples cut extremely thin, for, though they are fond of the paring, the apple itself disgusts them. These, however, not being a sufficient substitute for the juice of summer herbs, they must at this time be supplied with water, but so placed, that they cannot upset it into their beds. I must not omit, that occasionally they are much pleased with twigs of hawthorn, and of the common brier, eating even the very wood when it is of considerable thickness.

Bess, I have said, died young, Tiney lived to be nine years old, and died at last, I have reason to think, of some hurt in his loins, by a fall, Puss is still living, and has just completed his tenth year, discovering no signs of decay, nor even of age, except that he has grown more discreet and less frolicsome than he was. I cannot conclude without observing, that I have lately introduced a dog to his acquaintance, a spaniel that had never seen a hare to a hare that had never seen a spaniel. I did it with great caution, but there was no real need of it. Puss discovered no token of fear, nor Marquis the least symptom of hostility. There is therefore, it should seem, no natural antipathy between dog and hare, but the pursuit of the one occasions the flight of the other, and the dog pursues because he is trained to it, they eat bread at the same time out of the same hand, and are in all respects sociable and friendly.

I should not do complete justice to my subject, did I not add, that they have no ill scent belonging to them, that they are indefatigably nice in keeping themselves clean, for which purpose nature has furnished them with a brush under each foot, and that they are never infested by any vermin.

May 28, 1784.¹

¹MEMORANDUM FOUND AMONG MR. COWPER'S PAPERS

"Tuesday, March 9, 1786

"This day died poor Puss, aged eleven years eleven months. He died between twelve and one o'clock, of mere old age, and apparently without pain

Natural history was not his only amusement. The chisel and the saw were likewise in great request in his diligent hands, producing tables and joint-stools of mysterious workmanship. There was not, he said, in all the county, a squire who had made better squirrel-houses, hutches for rabbits, or bird-cages, than himself, while in the manufacture of cabbage nets he had no superior. His ambition even grasped the pencil, which he used through a whole year in delineating figures that had no parallel in nature or art. Having completed three landscapes, and seen them glazed and framed, and remembering that no artist was ever painted down except by himself, he determined to relinquish the pursuit, and retire with his fame. Of all his little engagements, gardening was the most beneficial and lasting. He began with lettuces and cauliflowers, ascending by slow steps to melons, an orange-tree, and myrtles. A severe winter put his skill to the trial, but he rose with the occasion, contriving to give his plants and beds a fire-heat, and he might have been seen wading through the snow, with the bellows under his arm, "just before going to bed, to give the latest puff to the embers, lest the frost should seize them before morning."

The friend who watched the poet in his long sickness, was to have the reward of finding a comfort for him when the heaviness of the night had in some measure melted in the morning. To the suggestion of Mrs Unwin we owe the first volume of Cowper's poems. The winter of 1780 was cheered by the employment. "At this season of the year," he said, "and in this gloomy uncomfortable climate, it is no easy matter for the owner of a mind like mine to divert it from sad objects, and fix it upon such as may administer to its amusement. Poetry, above all things, is useful to me in this respect." He was not one of the mob of gentlemen who write with ease. "A poet in my circumstances," he told a friend, "has a difficult part to act. One minute obliged to bridle his humour, if he has any, and the next to clap a spur to the sides of it;

those hours of genial intercourse flowed the "Task" and the grander Homeric strains. Great familiarity, however, is always a perilous delight, and after the sunny day the sharp frost sets in. Neither is constancy in his attachments, with the exception of Mrs Unwin, to be numbered among the virtues of Cowper. He has confessed that his admiration was passionate and fleeting. The gloss of a new pleasure soon wore off, and perhaps the most delicate texture was the least enduring. The friends quarrelled, and the cause of the lady's anger is stated by Hayley with a positiveness and authority that cannot be questioned. She had reason to be offended. Not even Theodora had treasured the verses of her laureate with a fonder interest. From those endearing expressions of regard, what closer bond might not "Sister Anne" have anticipated? Yet the charming delusion would have yielded to a more thoughtful knowledge of her friend. He treated his correspondents poetically. His kinsman, Mr Johnson, was "Johnny of Norfolk," "the Bull" symbolized the dissenting minister of that name, and the kind Throckmorton was "the Dowager Frog." Lady Austen had to learn by experience that love, like verse, is sometimes made in metaphor, and ends with it.

Any feeling of loneliness in the mind of Cowper was quickly dispersed by a new friendship with a family in the neighbouring village of Weston. The Throckmortons were Roman Catholics, liberal, charitable, and most accomplished and elegant in their tastes and pursuits.

Henceforward Weston Hall became a favourite haunt of Cowper, who found in it grace, kindness, books, and welcome. No vision of Guy Fawkes seems to have troubled his thoughts, the gentlemen opened their grounds to him, the ladies sang his songs, and even the Padre himself transcribed Homer. Dearer companionship was in store. "The Task," which appeared in 1785, awoke the sleeping memories of many friends. His old schoolfellow, Colman, who boarded in the same house at Westminster,

praised it in the *Observer*, and Lady Hesketh, inspired by "John Gilpin," sent a letter more delightful than all. The letter was followed by a visit, which led to the poet's removal from Olney to a very agreeable residence—the Lodge, at Weston. He had no sooner entered his new abode, than his eyes seemed to be opened to the wretchedness of the old, it was St Giles's to Grosvenor-square. Weston he considered to be one of the prettiest villages in England, with walks delightful throughout the year. A terrace sloped gently down to the Ouse, overlooking a pleasant valley, and short grass met the footstep whither-soever it turned. The Lodge was sufficiently spacious, and Cowper regarded it as the fulfilment of Milton's visionary hermitage, that sequestered abode, he told his cousin, as understood by a poet, always meaning a house with six easies in front, two comfortable parlours, a smart staircase, and three convenient bed-rooms. In the orchard he made the best winter walk in the parish, sheltered from cutting winds, and open to the early sun. It was just the place, he declared, to saunter along with Don Quixote in the hand, every denomination of feathered fowls swarmed in it, and pigs, the drollest in the world. A charming picture he draws of himself. Beau, of the silken ears, sits in his lap, licking his face, or nibbling the end of his pen; the birds make the wires ring in their joy, and through the elm tree, the sun, broken up among the leaves, glimmers over his paper with the softness of moonshine. Time deepened his affection, and playfully acknowledging his inability to write verses on any other spot, he compared himself to the man who could leap only at Rhodes. He had begun to enjoy his abode, and to be as comfortable as winter could make him, when his dear friend Mr Unwin was suddenly snatched from life. A nervous fever was the penalty of his love. Not only Homer, but the pen also had to be put aside. He did not, however, abandon books altogether, and among others he read the poems of Burns, which Mr. Rose, "a young

gentleman who came six miles out of his way to see" him, brought to his notice To Cowper, the dialect of Burns suggested the struggles of a bright candle in a dark lantern, but he esteemed him the only poet since Shakspeare, or rather since Prior, "who need not be indebted for any part of his praise to a charitable consideration of his origin, and the disadvantages under which he laboured"

The beginning of 1790 was marked by two circumstances of great interest in the life of Cowper, one being the receipt of his mother's picture, the gift of his cousin Anne Bodham, and the other the acquaintance of John Johnson, 'the grandson of his mother's brother, formerly rector of Cattfield, in Norfolk The picture, indeed, was the fruit of the visit Cowper's heart yearned to his kinsman He was then a very young man—"a wild boy," the poet called him, simple, humorous, and shy as a bird, with a sweet face, thoughtful and good, and moreover "a shred" of his own mother Some years after Mr Johnson closed the weary eyes of his famous relative, he obtained his reward, in a way stranger than fiction A young orphan lady, rich, elegant, musical, and devout, was in the habit of reading Cowper with ever new delight, and charmed by the affectionate watchfulness of his kinsman, she sighed, and "wished that heaven had made her such a man" Mrs Grant tells the story¹ "Her worthy and liberal-minded relations, notwithstanding Johnny's confined circumstances and unprepossessing appearance—for he is little, and diffident in manner—her people, in short, told his people that Johnny might try, so he did, and succeeded, for when you know him, he is charming, innocent, sweet-tempered, full of fancy and humour, and a delightful letter writer" It was quite in harmony with the romance of the courtship, that the wedding visit should be to Hayley's house, where the bride sang and played all Cowper's lyrics But Johnny had to cross a stormy sea, before he reached this haven

¹ Correspondence, I. 107.

In the August of the same year, 1790, Cowper completed his version of the great Homeric Poems, upon which he had bestowed the continual and patient toil of five years and one month, and in the spring of the following year he concluded the second revision. Perhaps an enterprise was never undertaken with slighter preparation, or with a more contemptuous opinion of a predecessor. Scarcely by one of his own Dunces could Pope have been more decried. In the judgment of Cowper, the simplicity of the original, the discrimination of the characters, and the naturalness of the narrative, had entirely disappeared from the English couplet, and the miserable nights and wanderings over trackless heaths, of which Pope complained, only seemed to his Critic to be the just tax levied by conscience upon an incompetent translator. No reader of Homer will deny that Pope modernized the costume and the furniture into the flowered gown and the lackered chair. But he performed what he designed, and made the Greek delightful in English. His work is a finer poem than it is a translation. Cowper is truer, but then he is harsher, we read him for the sake of Homer, but Pope may be read for himself. Let not Cowper be defrauded of his due praise. There are passages in which he caught the mantle of his ascending Master, and smote the current of song with equal power. An example is seen in the appearance of Apollo —

—The god,
Down from Olympus with his radiant bow,
And his full quiver o'er his shoulder hung,
Marched in his anger, shaken as he moved,
His rattling arrows told of his approach.
Gloomy he came as night, sate from the ships
Apart, and sent an arrow Clang'd the cord
Dread sounding, bounding on the silver bow.

These are noble lines, but the poems, viewed as wholes, are heavy and cold, while the inversions and transpositions are frequent and perplexing.

The translator of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* had hardly

rested from his labours, when he was invited to superintend an edition of the only poet who might claim to be the companion of the Grecian. Cowper's veneration for Milton was profound, but, like the object of his love, he had now fallen upon evil days. The protracted strain of the Homeric Bow began to be felt in every nerve, and the illness of Mrs Unwin, who suffered an attack of paralysis in the winter of 1791, shattered him still more. A second blow struck her in the following spring. Cowper was now entering the valley of the shadow of death. Day by day the same spectacle of grief filled his eyes, and surely the sun did not rise on a scene of mournfulness more peculiar and affecting. The brave, the gentle hearted woman—the second mother, the friend, the nurse—sat listless in her chair, and he, the tender, the grateful, and the unhappy, ever needing the sympathising hand for his own tears, gave up all his time and strength to the lightening and the bearing of her burden. How could he enjoy the walk in field or wood, or by the river side, when the companion of so many years was a prisoner in doors? And not her body only was smitten, the stroke reached the mind, benumbing its noblest qualities, and arousing the most earthly. Amid these varied miseries the preparations for the edition of Milton were carried on, not, however, without one most precious alleviation, in the unexpected friendship of Hayley, for which Cowper was indebted to that employment. He accounted him the chief acquisition which his verses had procured, and Hayley was a man, notwithstanding all his faults, of whose regard he might well be proud. We trace several features of resemblance in the two poets. Each retained a romantic remembrance of his mother, each had undergone much cruelty at school, each was subject to inflammation in the eyes, and each formed an early attachment for

Sidney, warbler of poetic prose.

The boy Hayley, during an attack of the small-pox, was

persuaded to lie in bed by his mother, who promised to read the *Arcadia* to him. But his face alone would be an eloquent letter of introduction to so sensitive a reader of countenances as Cowper. The glow and the ardour that we look for, and rarely see, in poets, lived and breathed in it. His eyes were dark and lustrous, and his manner, in a high degree captivating and elegant. From the first interview Cowper claimed him for a brother. The accomplishments of the author were likely to preserve and enlarge the impression of the man. Southey was led by his notes to the study of Spanish literature. His poetical character deserves neither the scorn nor the praise which it has received, and Porson, who denounced him as the worst of poets, did not outrage criticism more than Gibbon, when he called his lines the most melodious since Pope's. Hayley's executive powers were not equal to his taste, but his "*Triumphs of Temper*" will outlive poems of which the world hears louder panegyrics. He has the advantage, growing scarcer every day, of being intelligible, and if we look in vain for splendour, we find sense.

Some slight oddities of personal character, not to mention graver defects of practice, might excite a kindly smile in Cowper, when he discovered his friend's habit of walking in the garden, though covered by a deep snow, long before daylight with a lantern in his hand, and of riding on horseback with an umbrella, of which the sudden opening frequently caused a ludicrous disaster. Upon one occasion, we are informed, he was tossed into the air, at the moment when an interesting friend, from whom he had just parted, was watching him from her window through a telescope, in anticipation of the catastrophe.

Hayley, while staying with his brother bard in the Lodge, obtained his promise to return the visit at Earsham. A journey to Timbuctoo has been undertaken with less anxiety. However, he took the road at last, accompanied by Mrs. Unwin, for whose sake chiefly he braved the difficulties of the expedition, and a travelling minstrel never

reposed under a more elegant or hospitable roof Cowper's admiration of the house and its gardens is expressed in his letters In the second summer after his visit, Mr Cary, the translator of Dante, saw Hayley at Earlsam He talked of Cowper, and showed his favourite walk covered with laburnums, and the portrait by Romney Twenty-five years went by, and again the same ingenious scholar met the friend of Cowper, he was then an old man, living a lonely life in the village of Felpham, but the same beloved picture still hung before his eyes, and pointing to it, he said "There is our idol"

Cowper returned to Weston, September 22, 1792, his companion somewhat improved in strength, but he boasting small, if any amendment One blessing greeted him on the threshold, in the shape of a "manifestation of God's presence," only dimly seen, but an assurance that his Father's face had not entirely withdrawn its light A month, however, did not elapse before he complained of the future being dark as ever, and spoke of himself as scrambling always among rocks and precipices, with the enemy at his heels eager to push him over headlong The gloom rapidly thickened, until every greater and lesser light of hope and peace was obscured or extinguished in it A pension of three hundred pounds from the King, in 1794, awoke no satisfaction in the poet's breast, and the solicitude of his affectionate cousin, Lady Hesketh, seemed to be altogether without fruit It was now that his dear Johnny of Norfolk became his protector, and believing that a summer's residence by the sea might invigorate his mind and body, on Tuesday, July 28, 1795, he prevailed on Cowper and Mrs Unwin to accompany him to North Tuddenham in Norfolk, which residence they subsequently exchanged for the village of Mundesley, on the coast Cowper walked upon the sands, and listened to the soothing murmur of the breakers, but his heart was with the trees and the green leaves of Weston The common herbs reminded him of the birds which he had left behind.

For him the spring bloom and the autumn lights were to
shine and set no longer —

Unwatched the garden-bough shall sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unloved the beech-tree gather brown,
The maple burn itself away

Dunham Lodge, near Swaffham, was also, for a season, the home of Cowper, where he listened to his kinsman reading the novels of Richardson, and other works of fiction, but the last scene of his troubled pilgrimage was the town of East Dereham, in the same county. There, December 17, 1796, his "Mary" fell asleep, and was buried in the north aisle of the church. His own body of death was to be dragged through four years longer, in that interval between night and morning, he bestowed considerable care upon his Homer, composed the pathetic poem, "The Cast-away," and translated some of the Latin verses of Vincent Bourne. But the end was in view, his constitution sank rapidly under the weight of anguish and tune, and on Friday, the 25th of April, 1800, the voice of ONE who had been with him in all his storms, though he saw Him not, rebuked the waves and the winds, and there was a great calm. In the afternoon of that day the pilgrim spirit, its tears for ever dried, was at the haven where it would be. He was buried in St Edmund's Chapel, in the church of East Dereham, on Saturday, the 2nd of May, and Hayley wrote the inscription for his monument.

In Memory of WILLIAM COWPER, Esq

Born in Hertfordshire 1731

Buried in this Church 1800

Ye who with warmth the public triumph feel
Of talents, dignified by sacred zeal,
Here, to devotion's bard devoutly just,
Pay your fond tribute due to Cowper's dust !
England, exulting in his spotless fame,
Ranks with her dearest sons his fav'rite name
Sense, fancy, wit, suffice not all to raise
So clear a title to affection's praise
His highest honours to the heart belong ;
His virtues form'd the magic of his song .

The literary claims of Cowper do not rest on his poetry alone, his prose is exquisite "A line written from this place," was his remark to Mr Unwin, in 1783, "is a creation" Barren soil he found in that Silver End of Olney But his letters grew, like his poems, out of richer ground The smallest seed became a flower A rose, blown over by last night's gale, was to be bound up, Catharina's birthday had returned, and demanded a song, a friend dropped in, and he must take him to see Yardley Oak; he has just unpacked a wealthy hamper from his cousin; a game of battledore and shuttlecock was to be finished with Lady Austen, or the last new book is to be read aloud to the evening circle These were the materials of which he constructed his letters, and the style changes with the theme Now we have a series of what, in the want of an English term, we may call genre-paintings, displaying homo life under its aspects of refinement and ease, then a moral and philosophical reflection, after the manner of Addison, with a mild gleam of Steele's pleasantry playing over it, afterwards, a wise and thoughtful homily, or a strain of warm and beautiful affection The sunshine and the shadows, under the trees of Weston, might be the emblems of the gentleness and the humour that lighten and soften his many coloured correspondence He loved "tallang letters," and wrote them, and if the talk be commonly of himself, who does not rejoice in the gain? "You tell me," Southey said to an old friend, "to write like an Egotist, and I am well disposed to do so, for what else is it that gives private letters their greatest value, but the information they bring us of those for whom we are interested?" The letters of Cowper are his "Prose-writings," and related to his poetry, and illustrating it - having the same features and expression, and speaking with equal elegance and beauty.

Perhaps with the single exception of Shakspeare, Cowper is the English poet who has given the greatest happiness

to the greatest number. He had said, in a moment of gratified feeling at hearing the commendation of Joseph Warton, that the poet who pleases a man like him, has nothing left to wish for. But the praise of Warton was only the suffrage of the Scholar. It has been the rare fortune of Cowper to obtain the votes of the crowd. What safer candidate for Parnassus might go to the poll? The tasteful read him for his grace, and the serious for his religion. And the pleasure which he affords is of that natural, healthy character, which leaves no heat and weariness behind it. The mind is strengthened without a stimulant. His poetry influences the feelings, as a summer day affects the body; and the reader has a sense of enjoyment, calm, pure, and lasting.

As a moral satirist, Cowper may not be compared, for breadth and warmth of design and colour, with his elder brethren, Dryden and Pope, nor for power and music with his contemporary Churchill, and sometimes we seem to doze over a page of Mr. Newton's discourses set up in rhyme. But even in these ruder verses the chariot-wheels began to kindle. He had only started in the race. The "Task" was the goal. Of the four Poems which are everywhere known and read, "Paradise Lost" wins higher reverence; the "Seasons" stir the pulse with a wilder rapture; and the "Night Thoughts" unveil grander visions of the soul and its glories; but the "Task" is felt to be the chosen, the dear, the familiar friend; with a warning and a lesson for the old and the young, and a picture and a song for every hour in the day. No phrase can be more expressive than Coleridge's "divine chit-chat" of Cowper. Its biographical charm will be understood better by contrasting it with the "Prelude" of Wordsworth; and perhaps the only Episode which the reader wishes to erase, is that of the raising of cucumbers. Cowper has been called the Gainsborough of poetry, and the pencil never sprinkled fresher dews.

than we see dropping from his pen The little nook of his rural life was beneficial to the truthfulness of his pictures Those painters produce the noblest works who gaze much and often upon the same spots Such was Claude, watching the morning and evening lights over the Vatican and the valley of the Tiber, & Poussin gathering into his memory the broad shadows and the mouldering walls of the Coliseum, or Wilson returning to the old Scotch firs beside his door The most delicious landscapes of Milton were composed in his sequestered home in a Buckinghamshire village, the continual haunt of his footsteps, and the harvest of his eye

The honours of Cowper are not to be restricted to his longer poems There is scarcely any form of verse which he did not attempt, and he failed in none The ballad of "John Gulpin" forms a class to itself, "Boadicea" is not far behind the ode of Campbell, while in poems of affection, the lyrics of his own heart, he challenges every brother of the lyre, from its first melody until now The lines to "Mary," and to his "Mother's Picture," are not so much pathetic, as the words of Pathos itself His lighter efforts of compliment and sympathy abound in sprightliness and play, the gallantry of the high-bred gentleman clothed in the allegory of the poet Most of these pieces have a feminine birth and application His manners in the society of women are said to have been extremely soft and engaging He sang his choicest harmonies at their bidding, or in their praise, and never more may they hope to crown with their white hands such an Ariosto of the fireside

And as he is among the most various, he is also one of the most original of our writers Throughout the period of his author life, his reading was slight Of Collins he had never heard, until he saw his name in Johnson "Lives" Darwin surprised, and Beattie enchanted him but his literary recollections belonged to early manhood,

when the accent and the phrases of the "Spectator" and the "Tatler" still lingered upon the public tongue Milton he read in boyhood with a passion of delight, and the ear is often reminded in the "Task" of his majestic pauses. The writers, however, who chiefly coloured and shaped his poetry, were unquestionably Churchill and Young. His admiration of Churchill never wavered. Cowper was about fourteen years old when the concluding portion of the "Night Thoughts" appeared, and they had reached the height of their fame during his sojourn in the Temple. The resemblance to Young is not to be looked for in direct imitations, but in certain peculiarities of thought and utterance, scattered over the poems. To this class may be assigned the description of the gipsy encampment —

——the sportive wind blows wide
 Their fluttering rags, and shows a tawny skin,
The vellum of the pedigree they hide

And all these charms of fancy, tenderness, and wisdom are reflected through language nearly without a stain or a flaw. Purer, sweeter, simpler English never was written. La Fontaine gives the best idea of it to a French, as Wordsworth to a native reader. Several of the shorter poems are remarkable, as we see in Herbert, for the monosyllabic flow of the words, which not only enriches their music, but imparts to it the hearty Saxon tone. Thus, like every other excellence, he improved by labour. He did not take his pen from a line while there was the faintest hope of rendering it better, completing his work slowly, with many backward and forward steps of the artist, to judge of the effect of distance, combination, and colour. And so by genius and by toil, he has climbed to no mean seat in that Temple of Fame which he honoured and sought. Seven years before his death, he dreamed a dream of Pindus, and related it to Hayley. He seemed to be in a house in the city of London, with

much company assembled in the room, when, looking to the further end of it, he saw a figure which he immediately knew to be that of Milton. He was gravely attired in the fashion of the times. Cowper, after the transport of astonishment and delight had passed away, determined to accost him, and was received with a welcome of mingled dignity and sweetness, and listened to with a smile and a gentle bending of the head, as he spoke of the "Paradise Lost." Milton then took his hand affectionately, and said, "Well, you, for your part, will do well also." The dream melted with the sun, but its interpretation is known.

POEMS OF COWPER.

 VERSES WRITTEN AT BATH, ON FINDING
 THE HEEL OF A SHOE, IN 1748,

[THE opinion long prevailed that Cowper began to be a poet late in life. It was an error which he himself encouraged — "At forty years of age," he told Mr Park (1792), "I commenced author, it is a whim that has served me longest and best, and will probably be my last." This was a mere extravagance of the pen. He had been a rhymers from boyhood, and mentions a translation from Tibullus, done in his fifteenth year. In one of his letters he alludes to the ballads which he composed, while in the Temple, upon the model of Rowe, Congreve, and Prior, and of which "two or three had the honour to be popular." The poem on the "Heel of a Shoe" is the earliest specimen of his genius that has reached us, and it shows the music of the "Task" to have been, not an invented, but a recollected tune. The manner of Milton was not copied and burlesqued with more happiness by Philips, while in the moral of the verse "The Splendid Shilling" is greatly excelled.]

FORTUNE! I thank thee gentle Goddess! thanks!
 Not that my Muse, tho' bashful, shall deny,
 She would have thank'd thee rather, hadst thou cast
 A treasure in her way, for neither meed
 Of early breakfast, to dispel the fumes
 And bowel-raking pains of emptiness,
 Nor noontide feast, nor evening's cool repast,
 Hopes she from this—presumptuous, tho', perhaps,
 The cobbler, leather-carving artist! might
 Nathless she thanks thee, and accepts thy boor
 Whatever, not as erst the fabled rock,

Vainglorious fool ! unknowing what he found,
 Spurn'd the rich gem thou gav'st him Wherefore, ah!
 Why not on me that favour, (worthier sure!)
 Conferr'dst thou, Goddess! Thou art blind, thou say'st
 Enough!—thy blindness shall excuse the deed.

Nor does my Muse no benefit exhale
 From this thy scant indulgence!—even hero,
 Hints, worthy sage philosophy, are found,
 Illustrious hints, to moralize my song!
 This pond'rous heel of perforated hide
 Compact, with pegs indented, many a row,
 Haply (for such its massy form bespeaks),
 The weighty tread of some rude peasant clown
 Upborn on this supported oft, he stretch'd,
 With uncouth strides, along the furrow'd glebe,
 Flatt'ning the stubborn clod, till cruel time
 (What will not cruel time), or a wry step,
 Sever'd the strict cohesion, when, alas!
 He, who could erst, with even equal pace,
 Pursue his destin'd way with symmetry,
 And some proportion form'd, now, on one side,
 Curtail'd and maim'd, the sport of vagrant boys,
 Cursing his frail supporter, treacherous prop'
 With toilsome steps, and difficult, moves on
 Thus fares it oft with other than the feet
 Of humble villager—the statesman thus,
 Up the steep road, where proud ambition leads,
 Aspiring, first uninterrupted winds
 His prosp'rous way, nor fears miscarriage foul,
 While policy prevails, and friends prove true
 But that support soon failing, by him left,
 On whom he most depended, basely left,
 Betray'd, deserted, from his airy height
 Headlong he falls; and thro' the rest of life—
 Drags the dull load of disappointment on

AN ODE

ON READING SIR CHARLES GRANDISON, IN 1753

SAY, ye apostate and profane,
 Wretches who blush not to disdain
 Allegiance to your God,
 Did e'er your idly-wasted love
 Of virtue for her sake remove,
 And lift you from the crowd?

Would you the race of glory run,
 Know, the devout, and they alone,
 Are equal to the task
 The labours of the illustrious course
 Far other than the unaided force
 Of human vigour ask,

To arm against repeated ill
 The patient heart, too brave to feel
 The tortures of despair,
 Nor safer yet high-crested Pride,
 When wealth flows in with every tide
 To gain admittance there

To rescue from the tyrant's sword
 The oppressed,—unseen and unimplored.
 To cheer the face of woe,
 From lawless insult to defend
 An orphan's right, a fallen friend,
 And a forgiven foe,

These, these distinguish from the crowd,
 And these alone, the great and good,
 The guardians of mankind,
 Whose bosoms with these virtues heave,
 Oh, with what matchless speed they leave
 The multitude behind!

Then ask ye, from what cause on earth
 Virtues like these derive their birth?
 Derived from Heaven alone,
 Full on that favoured breast they shine,
 Where faith and resignation join
 To call the blessing down

Such is that heart,—but while the Muse
 Thy theme, O Richardson, pursues,
 Her feebler spirits faint,
 She cannot reach, and would not wrong
 That subject for an angel's song,
 The hero, and the saint!

AN EPISTLE TO ROBERT LLOYD, ESQ 1754.

[LLOYD was at this period an undergraduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, where, in the following year, he took his Bachelor's degree Cowper's praise has more of the schoolfellow than the critic Lloyd's inheritance of Prior was limited to the "jungle," he said very well of himself—

Like Tristram Shandy, I could write
 From morn to noon, from noon to night;
 Sometimes obscure, and sometimes leaning
 A little sideways to a meaning

He felt the Poet's Hill to be too steep for his powers, and wore a small nosegay from the flowers that grew at its foot, but the bloom and the colour soon faded together]

'Tis not that I design to rob
 Thee of thy birth right, gentle Bob
 For thou art born sole heir, and single,
 Of dear Mat Prior's easy jungle,
 Not that I mean, while thus I knit
 My threadbare sentiments together,
 To show my genius or my wit,
 When God and you know, I have neither,
 Or such, as might be better shown
 By letting poetry alone
 'Tis not with either of these views,
 That I presumed t' address the Muse
 But to divert a fierce banditti,
 (Sworn foes to every thing that's witty!)
 That, with a black, infernal train,
 Make cruel inroads in my brain,
 And daily threaten to drive thence
 My little garrison of sense
 The fierce banditti, which I mean,
 're gloomy thoughts, led on by Spleen.

Then there's another reason yet,
 Which is, that I may fairly quit
 The debt which justly became due
 The moment when I heard from you,
 And you might grumble, crony mine,
 If paid in any other coin,
 Since twenty sheets of lead, God knows,
 (I would say twenty sheets of prose,)
 Can ne'er be deem'd worth half so much
 As one of gold, and yours was such
 Thus, the preliminaries settled,
 I fairly find myself *pitch-kettled*,¹
 And cannot see, tho' few see better,
 How I shall hammer out a letter

First, for a thought—since all agree—
 A thought—I have it—let me see
 'Tis gone again—plague on't! I thought
 I had it—but I have it not
 Dame Gurton thus, and Hodge her son,
 That useful thing, her needle, gone!
 Rake well the cinders—sweep the floor,
 And sift the dust behind the door,
 While eager Hodge beholds the prize
 In old grimalkin's glaring eyes,
 And Gammer finds it on her knees
 In every shining straw she sees
 This simile were apt enough,
 But I've another, critic-proof!
 The virtuoso thus, at noon,
 Broiling beneath a July sun,
 The gilded butterfly pursues,
 O'er hedge and ditch, through gaps and mews
 And after many a vain essay,
 To captivate the tempting prey,
 Gives him at length the lucky pat,
 And has him safe beneath his hat.
 Then lifts it gently from the ground,
 But ah! 'tis lost as soon as found,
 Culprit his liberty regains,
 Flits out of sight, and mocks his pains
 The sense was dark, 'twas therefore fit
 With simile t' illustrate it;

¹ Pitch kettled, a favourite phrase at the time when this epistle was written, expressive of being puzzled, or what, in the *Spectator's* time, would have been called *bamboozled*—HAYLEY

But as too much obscures the sight,
 As often as too little light,
 We have our similes cut short,
 For matters of more grave import
 That Matthew's numbers run with ease
 Each man of common sense agrees!
 All men of common sense allow,
 That Robert's lines are easy too
 Where then the preference shall we place,
 Or how do justice in this case?
 Matthew (says Fame) with endless pains,
 Smooth'd and refined the meanest strains,
 Nor suffer'd one ill chosen rhyme
 T' escape him at the idlest time,
 And thus o'er all a lustre cast,
 That, while the language lives, shall last
 An't please your ladyship (quoth I),
 For 'tis my business to reply,
 Sure so much labour, so much toil,
 Bespeak at least a stubborn soil
 Theirs be the laurel-wreath decreed,
 Who both write well, and write full speed!
 Who throw their Helicon about
 As freely as a conduit spout!
 Friend Robert thus, like *chien savant*,
 Lets fall a poem *en passant*,
 Nor needs his genuine ore refine!
 'Tis ready polish'd from the mine.

THE FIFTH SATIRE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE

(Printed in Duncombe's Horace, 1750)

A HUMOROUS DESCRIPTION OF THE AUTHOR'S JOURNEY
FROM ROME TO BRUNDISIUM

'Twas a long journey lay before us,
 When I, and honest Heliodorus,
 Who far, in point of rhetoric,
 Surpasses ev'ry living Greek,
 Each leaving our respective home,
 Together sallied forth from Rome

First at Aricia we alight,
 And there refresh, and pass the night

Seized the occasion, fix'd the barge,
 Turn'd out his mule to graze at large,
 And slept forgetful of his charge
 And now the sun o'er eastern hill,
 Discover'd that our barge stood still,
 When one, whose anger vex'd him sore,
 With malice fraught leaps quick on shore,
 Plucks up a stake, with many a thynack.
 Assails the mule and driver's back

Then slowly moving on with pain,
 At ten Feronia's stream we gain,
 And in her pure and glassy wave
 Our hands and faces gladly lave
 Climbing three miles, fair Anxur's height
 We reach, with stony quarries white
 While here, as was agreed, we wait,
 Till, charged with business of the state
 Mæcenus and Cocceius come,
 The messengers of peace from Rome
 My eyes, by wat'ry humours clear
 And sore, I with black balsam smear
 At length they join us, and with them
 Our worthy friend Fonteus came,
 A man of such complete desert,
 Antony loved him at his heart
 At Fundi we refused to bait,
 And laugh'd at vain Aufidius' state,
 A prætor now, a scribe before,
 The purple-border'd robe he wore,
 His slave the smoking censor bore
 Tired, at Muræna's we repose,
 At Formia sup at Capito's

With smiles the rising morn we greet,
 At Sinuessa pleased to meet
 With Plotius, Varius, and the bard,
 Whom Mantua first with wonder heard
 The world no purer spirits knows,
 For none my heart more warmly glows
 O! what embraces we bestow'd,
 And with what joy our breasts o'erflow'd!
 Sure, while my sense is sound and clear,
 Long as I live, I shall prefer
 A gay, good-natured, easy friend,
 To every blessing Heaven can send.

At a small village the next night
 Near the Vulturnus we alight,
 Where, as employ'd on state affairs,
 We were supplied by the purvey'rs
 Frankly at once, and without hire,
 With food for man and horse, and ere
 Capua next day betimes we reach,
 Where Virgil and myself, who each
 Labour'd with different maladies,
 His such a stomach, mine such eyes,
 As would not bear strong exercise,
 In drowsy mood to sleep resort,
 Mæcenas to the tennis-court
 Next at Cocceus' farm we're treated,
 Above the Caudian tavern seated,
 His kind and hospitable board
 With choice of wholesome food was stored

Now, O ye nine, inspire my lays!
 To nobler themes my fancy raise!
 Two combatants, who scorn to yield
 The noisy, tongue-disputed field,
 Sarmentus and Cicirrus, claim
 A poet's tribute to their fame,
 Cicirrus of true Oscan breed,
 Sarmentus, who was never freed,
 But ran away We don't defame him,
 His lady lives, and still may claim him
 Thus dignified, in harder fray,
 These champions their keen wit display,
 And first Sarmentus led the way,
 "Thy locks (quoth he), so rough and coarse
 Look like the mane of some wild horse"
 We laugh Cicirrus undismay'd—
 "Have at you!"—cries, and shakes his head
 "'Tis well (Sarmentus says), you've lost
 That horn your forehead once could boast;
 Since, maim'd and mangled as you are,
 You seem to butt" A hideous scar
 Improved ('tis true) with double grace
 The native horrors of his face
 Well After much jocosely said
 Of his grim front, so fiery red,
 (For carbuncles had blotch'd it e'er,
 As usual on Campana's shore.)

" Give us (he cried), since you're so big,
 A sample of the Cyclops' jig!
 Your shanks methinks no buskins ask,
 Nor does your phiz require a mask."
 To this Cicirrus " In return
 Of you, sir, now I fain would learn,
 When 'twas, no longer deem'd a slave,
 Your chains you to the Lares gave
 For though a scriv'ner's right you claim,
 Your lady's title is the same
 But what could make you run away,
 Since, pigmy as you are, each day
 A single pound of bread would quite
 O erpow'r your puny appetite?"
 Thus joked the champions, while we laugh'd
 And many a cheerful bumper quaff'd

To Beneventum next we steer,
 Where our good host by over care
 In roasting thrushes lean as mice
 Had almost fall'n a sacrifice
 The kitchen soon was all on fire,
 And to the roof the flames aspire
 There might you see each man and mastic
 Striving, amidst this sad disaster,
 To save the supper Then they came
 With speed enough to quench the flame
 From hence we first at distance see
 Th' Apulian hills, well known to me,
 Parch'd by the sultry western blast,
 And which we never should have past,
 Had not Trivernus by the way
 Received us at the close of day
 But each was forced at ent'ring here
 To pay the tribute of a tear,
 For more of smoke than fire was seen—
 The hearth was piled with logs so green.
 From hence in chaises we were carried
 Miles twenty four, and gladly tarried
 At a small town, whose name my verse
 (So bar'rous is it) can't rehearse
 Know it you may by many a sign,
 Water is dearer far than wine
 There bread is deem'd such dainty fare
 That ev'r, prudent traveller

His wallet loads with many a crust,
 For at Cānusium you might just
 As well attempt to gnaw a stone
 As think to get a morsel down
 That too with scanty streams is fed;
 Its founder was brave Diomed
 Good Varius (ah, that friends must part!)
 Here left us all with aching heart
 At Rubi we arrived that day
 Well jaded by the length of way,
 And sure poor mortals ne'er were better
 Next day no weather could be better,
 No roads so bad, we scarce could crawl
 Along to fishy Barnū's wall
 Th' Egnatians next, who by the rules
 Of common sense are knaves or fools
 Made all our sides with laughter heave,
 Since we with them must needs believe,
 That incense in their temples burns,
 And without fire to ashes turns
 To circumcision's bigots tell
 Such tales! for me, I know full well,
 That in high Heav'n, unmoved by care,
 The Gods eternal quiet share
 Nor can I deem their spleen the cause
 Why fields nature breaks her laws
 Brundisium last we reach and ther
 Stop short the muse and traveller

THE NINTH SATIRE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

THE DESCRIPTION OF AN IMPERTINENT, ADAPTED TO THE
PRESENT TIMES. 1750

SAUNT'RING along the street one day,
 On trifles musing by the way—
 Up steps a free familiar wight
 (I scarcely knew th' man by sight)
 'Carlos (he cri'd) your health on dear
 Gad, I rejoice to meet you here!
 Pray Heav'n I may reach ————
 I'm well enough, as usual

Here I made fluff with much ado
 To interpose a word or two —
 "Have you no parents, Sir, no friends
 Whose welfare on your own depends? —
 "Parents, relations, say you? No.
 They're all disposed of long ago" —
 "Happy to be no more perplex'd!
 My fate too threatens, I go next
 Dispatch me, Sir, 'tis not too late,
 Alas! to struggle with my fate!
 Well, I'm convinced my time is come —
 When young, a gipsy told my doom
 The beldame shook her palmed head,
 As she perused my palm, and said
 Of poison, pestilence, or war,
 Gout, stone, defluxion, or catarrh,
 You have no reason to beware
 Beware the cockcomb's idle prate;
 Chiefly, my son, beware of that
 Be sure when you behold him, stir
 Out of all earshot, or you die"

To Rufus' Hall we now draw near;
 Where he was summon'd to appear
 Refute the charge the plaintiff brought,
 Or suffer judgment by default
 "For Heav'n's sake, if you love me, wait
 One moment! I'll be with you straight!"
 Glad of a plausible pretence —
 "Sir, I must beg you to dispense
 With my attendance in the court
 My legs will surely suffer for't" —
 "Nay, prithee, Carlos stop awhile!" —
 "Faith, Sir, in law I have no skill
 Besides I have no time to spare
 I must be going you know where" —
 "Well, I protest I'm doubtful now,
 Whether to let my suit or you!" —
 "Me without scruple! (I reply)
 Me, by all means, Sir!" — "No, no!
Allons, Monsieur!" 'Twere vain (you know)
 To strive with a victorious foe
 So I reluctantly obey,
 And follow, where he leads the way

"You and Newcastle are in class
 Still hand and foot, I see — I repeat —"

" Newcastle (let me tell you, Sir)
 Has not his equal every where "—
 " Well There indeed your fortune's made
 Faith, Sir, you understand your trade
 Would you but give me your good word
 Just introduce me to my lord
 I should serve charmingly by way
 Of second fiddle, as they say
 What think you, Sir? 'twere a good jest
 'Shife, we should quickly scout the rest '—
 " Sir, you mistake the matter far,
 We have no second fiddles there—
 Richer than I some folks may be,
 More learned, but it hurts not me
 Friends tho' he has of different kind,
 Each has his proper place assign'd."—
 " Strange matters these alleged by you!"—
 " Strange they may be, but are true"—
 " Well then, I vow, 'tis mighty clever,
 Now I long ten times more than ever
 To be advanced extremely near
 One of his shining character
 Have but the will—there wants no more,
 'Tis plain enough you have the pow'r
 His easy temper (that's the worst)
 He knows, and is so shy at first—
 But such a cavalier as you—
 Lord, Sir, you'll quickly bring him to '—
 Well, if I fail in my design,
 Sir, it shall be no fault of mine
 If by the saucy servile tribe
 Denied, what think you of a bribe?
 Shut out to day, not die with sorrow,
 But try my luck again to-morrow
 Never attempt to visit him
 But at the most convenient time,
 Attend him on each levee day,
 And there my humble duty pay,—
 Labour, like this, our want supplies,
 And they must stoop, who mean to rise "

While thus he wittingly harangued,
 For which you'll guess I wish'd him hang'd
 Campley, a friend of mine, came by,
 Who knew his humour more than I

We stop salute, and—"why so fast,
 Friend Carlos? Whither all this haste?"
 Fired at the thoughts of a reprimand,
 I pinch him, pull him, twitch his sleeve
 Nod, beckon, bite my lips, wink, point,
 Do every thing but speak plain out
 While he, sad dog, from the beginning
 Determined to mistake my meaning,
 Instead of pitying my curse,
 By jeering made it ten times worse
 "Camplsey what secret (pry 'y) is that
 You wanted to communicate?"—
 "I recollect But 'tis no matter
 Carlos, we'll talk of that hereafter
 E'en let the secret rest 'Twill tell
 Another time, Sir, just as well"

Was ever such a dismal day?
 Unlucky cur, he steals a way,
 And leaves me, half bereft of life,
 At mercy of the butcher's knife,
 When sudden, shouting from afar,
 See his antagonist appear!
 The bailiff seized him quick as thought!
 "Ho, Mr Scoundrel! Are you run, lit?
 Sir, you are witness to th' arrest!"—
 "Ay, marry, Sir, I'll do my best!"
 The mob huzzas Away they trudge
 Culprit and all before the judge
 Meanwhile I luckily enough
 (Thanks to Apollo) got clear off.

ADDRESSED TO MISS MACARTNEY,

ON BRADING THE PRAYER FOR INDULGENCE OF 1762

And dwells there in a female heart,
 By bounteous Heav'n unclouded
 The choicest raptures to impart,
 To feel the sweetest reformation—

1. Afternoon's Mrs. (Mrs. Macartney) (1762) (1762) (1762) (1762) (1762)
 In the old "English" (English) (English) (English) (English) (English)
 Well-known, with the (English) (English) (English) (English) (English)
 (English) (English) (English) (English) (English)

Dwells there a wish in such a breast
 Its nature to forego,
 'To smother in ignoble rest
 At once both bliss and woe !

Far be the thought, and far the strain
 Which breathes the low desire
 How sweet soe'er the verse complain,
 Tho' Phœbus string the lyre

Come then, fair maid (in nature wise)
 Who, knowing them, can tell
 From gen'rous sympathy what joys
 The glowing bosom swell.

In justice to the various pow'rs
 Of pleasing, which you share,
 Join me, amid your silent hours,
 To form the better pray'r

With lenient balm, may *Ob'ion* hence
 To fairy-land be driv'n,
 With ev'ry herb that blunts the sense
 Mankind received from heav'n

" Oh ! if my Sov'reign Author please
 Far be it from my fate,
 To live, unblest, in torpid ease,
 And slumber on in state

Each tender tie of life defied
 Whence social pleasures spring,
 Unmoved with all the world beside,
 A solitary thing—"

Some Alpine mountain, wrapt in snow,
 Thus braves the whirling blast,
 Eternal winter doom'd to know,
 No genial spring to taste

In vain warm suns their influence shed,
 The zephyrs sport in vain,
 He rears unchanged his barren head
 Whilst beauty decks the plain.

What tho' in sealy armour dress'd
Indifference may repel
 The shafts of woe—in such a breeze
 No joy can ever dwell

'Tis woven in the world's great plan
 And fix'd by Heav'n's decree,
 That all the true delights of man
 Should spring from *Sympathy*

'Tis nature bids, and whilst the liver
 Of nature we retain
 Our self-approving bosom draws
 A pleasure from its pain

Thus grief itself has comforts dear,
 The sordid never know,
 And ecstacy attends the tear,
 When virtue bids it flow,

For, when it streams from that pure source
 No bribes the heart can win,
 To check, or alter from its course
 The luxury within

Peace to the phlegm of sullen slaves
 Who, if from labour freed,
 Extend no care beyond themselves,
 Unpleasing and unpleased

Let no low thought suggest the way
 Oh! grant, kind Heav'n to me,
 Long as I draw the real air
 Sweet Sensibility.

Where'er the heav'nly ray has been
 With lustre beaming o'er,
 A train, attendant on their Queen
 (Her rosy chorus) be,

The jocund Loves in Hymen dress'd
 With torches and bright
 And generous Friendship plumes
 With Pity's sacred wings

The gentler virtues too are join'd,
In youth immortal warm,
The soft relations, which, combined,
Give life her ev'ry charm

The Arts come smiling in the close,
And lend celestial fire,
The marble breathes, the canvas glows,
The Muses sweep the lyre

"Still may my melting bosom cleave
To suff'rings not my own,
And still the sigh responsive heave,
Where'er is heard a groan

So pity shall take Virtue's part,
Her natural ally,
And fashioning my soften'd heart,
Prepare it for the sky "

This artless vow may Heav'n receive,
And you, fond maid, approve,
So may your guiding angel give
Whatever you wish or love

So may the rosy finger'd hours
Lead on the various year,
And ev'ry joy, which now is yours,
Extend a larger sphere

And suns to come, as round they wheel,
Your golden moments bless,
With all a tender heart can feel,
Or lively fancy guess

TABLE TALK

Si to fortè mem gravis uret sarcina chartæ
Abjuncto

HOR. Lib. i. Epist. 13

[COWPER was just recovering his usual spirits, after a dark and dreary season, when Mrs Unwin, in the words which Hayley took down from her lips, "strongly solicited him" to undertake a poem of considerable length, and suggested the subject of it—"The Progress of Error" The proposal came at a time that needed it most; and the frosty windows of Olney shone, of a sudden, with a poetical light that struck a pleasant warmth into the interior The winter of 1780 was an epoch in Cowper's life "When I can find no other occupation I think, and when I think I am very apt to do it in rhyme. Hence it comes to pass that the season of the year which generally pinches off the flowers of poetry unfolds mine, such as they are, and crowns me with a winter garland"¹ And the garland was to be hung in the eyes of the Public To Unwin he wrote—"You ask me how I feel on the occasion of my approaching publication? Perfectly at my ease I have had in view two principal objects, first, to amuse myself, and secondly, to compass that point in such a manner that others might possibly be the better for my amusement." So we deceive ourselves in poetry and life. The letters of Cowper show that his "ease" was only in the expression of it, and that he might have applied to his own anxiety the confession of Southey,— "Young lady never felt more desire to see herself in a new ball dress, than I do to see my own performance in print." Often hindered, the book at length appeared, and kind voices rewarded and encouraged the writer Unwin sent news of his wife's smiles and tears, Newton gave him hints of kindly approbation and court favour, and the prosaic mind of Franklin added its praise. The opposite column was not empty, the *Critical Review* dubbed him a dunce, and the Chancellor disregarded his poems and his letter But neither friend nor foe can intermeddle much, or long, with the joy of a true poet To Cowper, these verses had been the chimes of a Sabbath, soothing his troubled thoughts to rest, and opening scenes of blessedness and hope

The volume was in many respects remarkable, but it scarcely

¹ To Hill, May 9, 1781

gave a promise of the "Task." When Cowper, after the lapse of many years, began to compose heroic lines, he sought a model in the most popular and reckless versifier of the age. Churchill was the object of his wonder and imitation. He had no sympathy with what he calls "the musical finesse of Pope." Now and then we catch a faint echo of Dryden's organ notes, but the structure of the verse, the homeliness of the imagery, and the strength, not to say the occasional coarseness of the idioms, are clearly borrowed from Churchill. Even the *Serio Comic sketches*, which lend the most popular feature to Cowper's poetry, were, doubtless, suggested by the same pen. The portrait of the "Cit," in "Night," belongs to the Series that fills the *Molière gallery* of Cowper. In Churchill he found, also, hints of those religious illustrations which he employed with so much greater fitness, for the satirist preserved his Pulpit knowledge when he put off his gown.

Cowper has given his own view of versification, in comparing it to the stately progress of a swan, and to the cottage beauty who touches the heart by the naturalness of her charms. The swan, conquering the current by force, may be the emblem of Churchill, as it certainly is of Dryden, but there is a melody, a grace, in words, of which a representative may be discovered in the same swan floating upon her own shadow, and hardly ruffling the gleams which the setting sun sheds into the water. In perfect verses we look for a calm as well as for a tide. A poem had lately appeared with this sweetness conspicuous in every line. I allude to "The Deserted Village," which, coming out in the last week of May, 1770, had gone into a fourth edition before the end of June. But no tidings of Auburn came to Olney, and Churchill retained the undivided allegiance of Cowper. The work was injured by it, and the sectarian temper, so frequent and bitter, left a stronger blemish. Mrs. Sewall said that no reader could have expected the diamonds of Cowper, who had only seen the Scotch pebbles which he offered for sale at the beginning of his career, but angry prejudice alone could have denounced the poems as "an uncharitable volume in cramp rhyme." The hand was often harsh, and the harp wanted tuning, but cunning soon came to the one, and music to the other. The characteristic of the book is masculine sense. "Table Talk" he thought the best to begin with, as being the most popular in its subject, and wishing at "first setting out to catch the public by the ear, and hold them by it as long as possible."

A You told me, I remember, glory built
 On selfish principles, is shame and guilt
 The deeds that men admire as half divine,
 Stark¹ naught, because corrupt in their design
 Strange doctrine this! that without scruple tear
 The laurel that the very Lightning spares,
 Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,
 And eats into his bloody sword like rust

B I grant, that men continuing what they are
 Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war
 And never meant the rule should be applied
 To him that fights with justice on his side

Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dews,
 Reward his mem'ry, dear to ev'ry muse,
 Who, with a courage of unshaken root,
 In honour's field advancing his firm foot,
 Plants it upon the line that justice draws,
 And will prevail or perish in her cause
 'Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes
 His portion in the good that Heav'n bestows,
 And when recording history displays
 Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,
 Tells of a few stout hearts that fought and died
 Where duty placed them, at their country's side,
 The man that is not moved with what he reads,
 That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
 Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
 Is base in kind, and born to be a slave

But let eternal infamy pursue
 The wretch to nought but his ambition true,
 Who for the sake of filling with one blast
 The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste
 Think yourself station'd on a tow'ring rock,
 To see a people scatter'd like a flock,
 Some royal mastiff panting at their heels,
 With all the savage thirst a tiger feels,
 Then view him self-proclaim'd in a gazette,
 Chief monster that has plagued the nations yet,
 The globe and sceptre in such hands misplaced,
 Those ensigns of dominion, how disgraced!
 The glass that bids man mark the fleeting hour,
 And death's own scythe would better speak his power.

¹ *Stark* was used by our earlier writers to give intensity to an expression
 Sidney has Cowper's not phrase We still hear of people who are "stark
 and

Then grace the bony phantom in their stead
 With the king's shoulder knot and gay cockade,
 Clothe the twin brethren in each other's dress,
 The same their occupation and success

A 'Tis your belief the world was made for man,
 Kings do but reason on the selfsame plan,
 Maintaining yours, you cannot theirs condemn,
 Who think or seem to think, man made for them

B Seldom, alas! the power of logic reigns
 With much sufficiency in royal brains
 Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone,
 Wanting its proper base to stand upon
 Man made for kings! those optics are but dun
 That tell you so—say rather, they for him
 That were indeed a king ennobling thought,
 Could they, or would they, reason as they ought
 The diadem, with mighty projects lined,
 To catch renown by ruining mankind,
 Is worth, with all its gold and glitt'ring store,
 Just what the toy will sell for and no more

Oh! bright occasions of dispensing good,
 How seldom used, how little understood!
 To pour in virtue's lap her just reward,
 Keep vice restrain'd behind a double guard,
 To quell the faction that affronts the throne,
 By silent magnanimity alone,
 To nurse with tender care the thriving arts,
 Watch every beam philosophy imparts,
 To give religion her unbridled scope,
 Nor judge by statute a believer's hope,
 With close fidelity and love unfeign'd,
 To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd,
 Covetous only of a virtuous praise,
 His life a lesson to the land he sways,
 To touch the sword with conscientious awe,
 Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw,
 To sheath it in the peace restoring close,
 With joy, beyond what victory bestows,—
 Blest country! where these kingly glories shine,
 Blest England! if thus happiness be thine

A Guard what you say, the patriotic tribe
 Will sneer and charge you with a bribe—*B* A bribe?
 The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,
 To lure me to the baseness of a lie
 And of all lies (be that one poet's boast)
 The lie that flatters, I abhor the most

Those arts be theirs that hate his gentle reign,
But he that loves him has no need to feign

A Your smooth eulogium, to one crown address'd,
Seems to imply a censure on the rest

B Quevedo,¹ as he tells his sober tale,
Ask'd, when in hell, to see the royal jail,
Approved their method in all other things,
But where, good Sir, do you confine your kings?
'There—said his guide, the group is full in view
Indeed? replied the Don—there are but few
His black interpreter the charge disdain'd—
Few, fellow? There are all that ever reign'd
Wit undistinguishing is apt to strike
The guilty and not guilty, both alike

I grant the sarcasm is too severe,
And we can readily refute it here,
While Alfred's name, the father of his age,
And the Sixth Edward's grace th' historic page

A. Kings then at last have but the lot of all,
By their own conduct they must stand or fall

B True While they live, the courtly laureat pays
His quit-rent ode, his pepper-corn of praise,
And many a dunce whose fingers itch to write,
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite,
A subject's faults, a subject may proclaim,
A monarch's errors are forbidden game
Thus free from censure, over-awed by fear,
And praised for virtues that they scorn to wear,
The fleeting forms of majesty engage
Respect, while stalking o'er life's narrow stage,
Then leave their crimes for history to scan,
And ask with busy scorn, Was this the man?

I pity kings whom worship waits upon
Obsequious, from the cradle to the throne,
Before whose infant eyes the flatt'rer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows
Whom education stiffens into state,
And death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh! if servility with supple knees,
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please,
If smooth dissimulation, skill'd to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face,
If smiling peeresses and sniping peers,
Encompassing his throne a few short years,

¹ According to Southey, the story is not contained in "Quevedo"

If the gilt carriage and the pumper'd steed,
That wants no driving and disdains the lead;
If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks;
Should ring and standing as if struck to stone,
While condescending majesty looks on,
If monarchy consist in such base things,
Sighing, I say again, I pity kings!

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,
Ev'n when he labours for his country's good
To see a band call'd patriot for no cause,
But that they catch at popular applause,
Careless of all th' anxiety he feels,
Hook disappointment on the public wheels,
With all their suppliant fluency of tongue,
Most confident, when palpably most wrong,——
If thus be kingly, then farewell for me
All kingship, and may I be poor and free

To be the Table Talk of clubs upstairs,
To which th' unwash'd artificer repairs,
T' indulge his genius after long fatigue,
By diving into cabinet intrigue,
(For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
'To him is relaxation and mere play,)
To win no praise when well wrought plans prevail,
But to be rudely censured when they fail,
To doubt the love his fav'rites may pretend,
And in reality to find no friend,
If he indulge a cultivated taste
His gall'ries with the works of art well graced,
To hear it call'd extravagance and waste,
If these attendants, and if such as these,
Must follow royalty, then welcome ease,
However humble and confined the sphere,
Happy the state that has not these to fear

A Thus men whose thoughts contemplative have
dwelt,

On situations that they never felt,
Start up sagacious, cover'd with the dust
Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,
And prate and preach about what others prove,
As if the world and they were hand and glove
Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares,
They have their weight to carry, subjects theirs,
Poets, of all men, ever least regret
Increasing taxes and the nation's debt.

Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse,
The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,
No bard, howe'er majestic, old or new,
Should claim my first attention more than you

B Not Brindley¹ nor Bridgewater would essay
To turn the course of Helicon that way,
Nor would the nine consent, the sacred tide
Should purl amidst the traffic of Cheapside,
Or tinkle in 'Change Alley, to amuse
The leathern ears of stock-jobbers and Jews

A Vouchsafe, at least, to pitch the key of rhyme
To themes more pertinent, if less sublime
When ministers and ministerial arts,
Patriots who love good places at their hearts,
When Admirals extoll'd for standing still,
Or doing nothing with a deal of skill,
Gen'als who will not conquer when they may,
Firm friends to peace, to pleasure, and good pay,
When freedom wounded almost to despair,
Though discontent alone can find out where,—
When themes like these employ the poet's tongue,
I hear as mute as if a syren sung
Or tell me if you can, what pow'r maintains
A Briton's scorn of arbitrary chains?
That were a theme might animate the dead,
And move the lips of poets cast in lead

B The cause, tho' worth the search, may yet elude^a
Conjecture and remark, however shrewd.
They take, perhaps, a well-directed aim,
Who seek it in his climate and his frame
Lib'ral in all things else, yet nature here
With stern severity deals out the year
Winter invades the spring, and often pours
A chilling flood on summer's drooping flow'rs,
Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,
Ungential blasts attending, curl the streams,
The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork
With double toil, and shiver at their work,
Thus with a rigour, for his good design'd,
She rears her fav'rite man of all mankind
His form robust, and of elastic tone,
Proportion'd well, half muscle and half bone,

¹ It was about the year 1758 that Brindley began his scientific labours for the Duke of Bridgewater. One anecdote of Brindley is well known. When a member of a committee asked him, for what purpose he considered rivers to have been made, he answered, after a short pause,—“To feed navigable canals.”

The mind attains beneath her happy reign,
 The growth that nature meant she should attain
 The varied fields of science, ever new,
 Op'ning and wider op'ning on her view,
 She ventures onward with a prosp'rous force,
 While no base fear impedes her in her course
 Religion, richest favour of the skies,
 Stands most reveal'd before the freeman's eyes.
 No snares of superstition blot the day,
 Liberty chases all that gloom away,
 The soul, emancipated, unoppress'd,
 Free to prove all things and hold fast the best,
 Learns much, and to a thousand list'ning minds,
 Communicates with joy the good she finds
 Courage in arms, and ever prompt to show
 His manly forehead to the fiercest foe,
 Glorious in war, but for the sake of peace,
 His spirits rising as his toils increase,
 Guards well what arts and industry have won,
 And freedom claims him for her first-born son
 Slaves fight for what were better cast away,
 The chain that binds them, and a tyrant's sway,
 But they that fight for freedom, undertake
 The noblest cause mankind can have at stake,
 Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call
 A blessing, freedom is the pledge of all
 O liberty! the pris'ner's pleasing dream,
 The poet's muse, his passion and his theme,
 Genius is thine, and thou art fancy's nurse,
 Lost without thee th' ennobling pow'rs of verse,
 Heroic song from thy free touch acquires
 Its clearest tone, the rapture it inspires,
 Place me where winter breathes its keenest air,
 And I will sing if liberty be there,
 And I will sing at liberty's dear feet,
 In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat

A Sing where you please, in such a cause I grant
 An English Poet's privilege to rant,
 But is not freedom, at least is not ours
 Too apt to play the wanton with her pow'rs,
 Grow freakish, and o'erleaping ev'ry bound
 Spread anarchy and terror all around?

B Agreed But would you sell or slay your horse
 For bounding and curvetting in his course,
 Or, if, when ridden with a careless rein,
 He break away and seek the distant plain?

He stood, as some inimitable hand
 Would strive to make a Paul, or Tully stand
 No sycophant or slave that dared oppose
 Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose,
 And every venal stickler for the yoke,
 Felt himself crush'd at the first word he spoke

Such men are raised to station and command,
 When Providence means mercy to a land
 He speaks, and they appear, to him they owe
 Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow,
 To manage with address, to seize with power
 The crisis of a dark decisive hour

So Gideon¹ earn'd a viet'ry not his own,
 Subserviency his praise, and that alone

Poor England! thou art a devoted deer,
 Beset with ev'ry ill but that of fear
 The nations hunt, all mark thee for a prey,
 They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay
 Undaunted still, though wearied and perplex'd,
 Once Chatham saved thee, but who saves thee next?
 Alas! the tide of pleasure sweeps along
 All that should be the boast of British song
 'Tis not the wreath that once adorn'd thy brow,
 The prize of happier times will serve thee now
 Our ancestry, a gallant Christian race,
 Patterns of ev'ry virtue, ev'ry grace,
 Confess'd a God, they kneel'd before they fought,
 And praised him in the victories he wrought
 Now from the dust of ancient days bring forth
 Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth,
 Courage, ungraced by these, affronts the skies,
 Is but the fire without the sacrifice
 The stream that feeds the well spring of the heart
 Not more invigorates life's noblest part,
 Than virtue quickens with a warmth divine,
 The pow'rs that sin has brought to a decline

A Th' inestimable estimate of Brown,²
 Rose like a paper kite, and charm'd the town,

¹ See the history of Gideon, Judges vi vii viii

² Dr John Brown His Essay on "Satire," introduced him to Warburton, by whose influence he obtained the rectory of Hockley, near Colchester, which a quarrel with the patron's family soon caused him to resign. Hurd calls him a man of honour and probity, but suspicious and ungrateful in temper. His errors had a deeper seat. He died by his own hand in 1766. The estimate did, indeed, rise "like a paper kite," seven editions having been demanded in one year; and Voltaire attributed to its publication the sudden burst of English valour and patriotism.

What follows next let cities of great name,
 And regions long since desolate proclaim
 Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome,
 Speak to the present times and times to come,
 They cry aloud in every careless ear,
 Stop, while ye may, suspend your mad career;
 O learn from our example and our fate,
 Learn wisdom and repentance ere too late¹

Not only vice disposes and prepares
 The mind that slumbers sweetly in her snares,
 To stoop to tyranny's usurp'd command,
 And bend her polish'd neck beneath his hand,
 (A dire effect, by one of nature's laws
 Unchangeably connected with its cause,)
 But Providence himself will intervene
 To throw his dark displeasure o'er the scene
 All are his instruments, each form of war,
 What burns at home, or thunders from afar,
 Nature in arms, her elements at strife,
 The storms that overset the joys of life,
 Are but his rods to scourge a guilty land,
 And waste it at the bidding of his hand
 He gives the word, and mutiny soon roars
 In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores,
 The standards of all nations are unfurl'd,
 She has one foe, and that one foe, the world.
 And if he doom that people with a frown,
 And mark them with the seal of wrath, press'd down
 Obduracy takes place, callous and tough
 The reprobated race grows judgment-proof
 Earth shakes beneath them, and heaven roars above,
 But nothing scares them from the course they love,
 To the lascivious pipe and wanton song,
 That charm down fear, they frolic it along,
 With mad rapidity and unconcern,
 Down to the gulf from which is no return
 They trust in navies and their navies fail,
 God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail;
 They trust in armies, and their courage dies,
 In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies,
 But all they trust in, withers, as it must,
 When He commands in whom they place no trust

¹ "It takes a great many blows to knock down a great nation; and in the case of poor England, a great many heavy ones have not been wanting. But the blow is not yet struck that is to make us fall upon our knees" 178

If sentiment were sacrificed to sound,
And truth cut short to make a period round,
I judged a man of sense could scarce do worse,
Than caper in the morris-dance of verse¹

B Thus reputation is a spur to wit,
And some wits flag through fear of losing it
Give me the line, that ploughs its stately course
Like a proud swan, conq'ring the stream by force
That like some cottage beauty strikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art
When labour and when dulness, club in hand,
Like the two figures at St Dunstan's stand,
Beating alternately, in measured time,
The clock-work tintinnabulum of rhyme,
Exact and regular the sounds will be,
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me

From him who rears a poem lank and long,
To him who strains his all into a song,
Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,
All birks and braes, though he was never there,
Or having whelp'd a prologue with great pains,
Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains;
A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke,
An art contrived to advertise a joke,
So that the jest is clearly to be seen,
Not in the words—but in the gap between,
Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,
The substitute for genius, sense, and wit

To dally much with subjects mean and low,
Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so
Neglected talents rust into decay,
And ev'ry effort ends in push-pin play
The man that means success, should soar above
A soldier's feather, or a lady's glove,
Else, summoning the muse to such a theme,
The fruit of all her labour is whipt-cream
As if an eagle flew aloft, and then—
Stoop'd from his highest pitch to pounce a wren
As if the poet purposing to wed,
Should carve himself a wife in gingerbread

Ages elapsed o'er Homer's lamp appear'd
And ages o'er the Mantuan swan was heard.

¹ Butler has—

“A morris dancer, dressed in bells,
Only to serve for noise, and nothing else.”

To carry nature lengths unknown before,
 To give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more
 Thus genius rose and set at order'd times,
 And shot a day spring into distant climes
 Ennobling ev'ry region that he chose,
 He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose,
 And tedious years of Gothic darkness pass'd,
 Emerged all splendour in our isle at last
 Thus lovely Halcyons dive into the main,
 Then show far off their shining plumes again

A Is genius only found in epic lays?
 Prove this, and forset all pretence to praise
 Make their heroic pow'rs your own at once,
 Or candidly confess yourself a dunce

B These were the chief, each interval of night
 Was graced with many an undulating light,
 In less illustrious bards his beauty shone
 A meteor, or a star, in these, the sun

The nightingale may claim the topmost bough
 While the poor grasshopper must clurp below
 Like him unnoticed, I, and such as I,
 Spread little wings, and rather skip than fly,
 Perch'd on the meagre produce of the land
 An ell or two of prospect we command,
 But never peep beyond the thorny bound,
 Or oaken fence that hems the paddock round

In Eden, ere yet innocence of heart
 Had faded, poetry was not an art,
 Language above all teaching, or if taught,
 Only by gratitude and glowing thought,
 Elegant as simplicity, and warm
 As ecstasy, unmanacled by form,
 Not prompted as in our degen'rate days,
 By low ambition and the thirst of praise,
 Was natural as is the flowing stream,
 And yet magnificent, a God the theme
 That theme on earth exhausted, though above
 'Tis found as everlasting as his love,
 Man lavish'd all his thoughts on human things,
 The feats of heroes and the wrath of kings,
 But still, while virtue kindled his delight,
 The song was moral, and so far was right
 'Twas thus till luxury seduced the mind,
 To joys less innocent, as less refined,
 Then genius danced a bacchanal, he crown'd
 The brimming goblet seized the thyrans' bound

His brows with ivy, rush'd into the field
 Of wild imagination, and there reel'd
 The victim of his own lascivious fires,
 And dizzy with delight, profaned the sacred wires
 Anacreon, Horace, play'd in Greece and Rome
 This Bedlam part, and others nearer home
 When Cromwell fought for pow'r, and while he reign'd
 The proud protector of the pow'r he gain'd,
 Religion harsh, intolerant, austere,
 Parent of manners like herself severe,
 Drew a rough copy of the Christian face
 Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace,
 The dark and sullen humour of the time
 Judged ev'ry effort of the muse a crime,
 Verse in the finest mould of fancy cast,
 Was lumber in an age so void of taste
 But when the second Charles assumed the sway,
 And arts revived beneath a softer day,
 Then, like a bow long forced into a curve,
 The mind released from too constrain'd a nerve,
 Flew to its first position with a spring
 That made the vaulted roofs of pleasure ring
 His court, the dissolute and hateful school
 Of wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,
 Swarm'd with a scribbling herd, as deep inlaid
 With brutal lust as ever Circe made
 From these a long succession, in the rage
 Of rank obscenity debauch'd their age,
 Nor ceased, till ever anxious to redress
 Th' abuses of her sacred charge, the press,
 The muse instructed a well nurtured train
 Of abler votaries to cleanse the stain,
 And claim the palm for purity of song,
 That lewdness had usurp'd and worn so long
 Then decent pleasantry and sterling sense
 That neither gave nor would endure offence,
 Whipp'd out of sight, with satire just and keen,
 The puppy pack that had defiled the scene
 In front of these came Addison In him
 Humour in holiday and slightly trim,
 Sublimity and Attic taste, combined
 To polish, furnish, and delight the mind
 Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,
 In verse well disciplin'd, complete, compact,
 Gave virtue and morality a grace
 That quite eclipsing pleasure's painted face

Levied a tax of wonder and applause,
 Ev'n on the fools that trampled on their laws
 But he (his musical finesse was such,
 So nice his ear so delicate his touch)
 Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
 And ev'ry warbler has his tune by heart.
 Nature imparting her satiric gift,
 Her serious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,
 With droll sobriety they raised a smile
 At folly's cost, themselves unmoved the while
 That constellation set, the world in vain
 Must hope to look upon their like again
 A Are we then left—B Not wholly in the dark
 Wit now and then, struck smartly, shows a spark,
 Sufficient to redeem the modern race
 From total night and absolute disgrace
 While servile trick and imitative knack
 Confine the million in the beaten track,
 Perhaps some courser, who disdains the road
 Snuffs up the wind and flings himself abroad
 Contemporaries all surpass'd, see one,
 Short his career, indeed, but ably run
 Churchill,¹ himself unconscious of his power,
 In penury consumed his idle hours,
 And, like a scatter'd seed at random sown,
 Was left to spring by vigour of his own
 Lifted at length by dignity of thought,
 And dint of genius to an affluent lot,
 He laid his head in luxury's soft lap,
 And took too often there his easy nap
 If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,
 'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth
 Surly and slovenly and bold and coarse,
 Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force,
 Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,
 Always at speed and never drawing bit,

Churchill drew his own portrait in the same colours —

"Had I the power, I could not have the time
 Whilst spirits flow, and life is in her prime,
 Without a run against Pleasure, to design
 A plan, to methodize each thought, each line
 Highly to finish, and make every grace,
 In itself charming, take new charms from place
 Nothing of books, and little known of men,
 When the mad fit comes on, I seize the pen,—
 Though as they run, the rapid thoughts set down,—
 Longer as they run, discharge them on the town."

GUINAM b 11

He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,
 And so disdain'd the rules he understood,
 The laurel seem'd to wait on his command,
 He snatch'd it rudely from the muse's hand
 Nature, exerting an unwearied pow'r,
 Forms, opens, and gives scent to ev'ry flower,
 Spreads the fresh verdure of the field, and leads,
 The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads,
 She fills profuse ten thousand little throats
 With music, modulating all their notes,
 And charms the woodland scenes and wilds unknown,
 With artless airs and concerts of her own,
 But seldom (as if fearful of expense)
 Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence
 Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,
 Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought,
 Fancy, that, from the bow that spans the sky,
 Brings colours dipp'd in heav'n that never die,
 A soul exalted above earth, a mind
 Skill'd in the characters that form mankind,
 And as the sun, in rising beauty dress'd,
 Looks to the westward from the dappled east,
 And marks, whatever clouds may interpose,
 E'er yet his race begins, its glorious close,
 An eye like his to catch the glorious goal,
 Or e'er the wheels of verse begin to roll,
 Like his o shed illuminating rays
 On ev'ry scene and subject it surveys,
 Thus graced the man asserts a poet's name,
 And the world cheerfully admits the claim.¹
 Pity! Religion has so seldom found,
 A skilful guide into poetic ground,
 The flow'rs would spring where'er she deign'd to stray,
 And ev'ry muse attend her in her way
 Virtue indeed meets many a rhyming friend,
 And many a compliment politely penn'd,
 But unattired in that becoming vest
 Religion weaves for her, and half undress'd,
 Stands in the desert shiv'ring and forlorn,
 A win'try figure, like a wither'd thorn
 The shelves are full, all other themes are sped,
 Hackney'd and worn to the last flimsy thread,
 Satire has long since done his best, and curst
 And loathsome ribaldry has done his worst,

¹ Hayley quotes these lines as containing a masterly picture of *Compos* himself

Fancy has sported all her powers away
 In tales, in trifles, and in children's play,
 And 'tis the sad complaint, and almost true,
 Whate'er we write, we bring forth nothing new.
 'Twere new indeed, to see a bard all fire,
 Touch'd with a coal from heav'n, assume the lyre,
 And tell the world, still handling as he sung,
 With more than mortal music on his tongue,
 That he who died below, and reigns above,
 Inspires the song, and that his name is love

For after all, if merely to beguile
 By flowing numbers and a flow'ry style,
 The tedium that the lazy rich endure,
 Which now and then sweet poetry may cure
 Or if to see the name of idol self,
 Stamp'd on the well bound quarto, grace the shelf,
 To float a bubble on the breath of fame,
 Prompt his endeavour, and engage his aim
 Debased to servile purposes of pride,
 How are the powers of genius misapplied?
 The gift whose office is the Giver's praise,
 To trace him in his word, his works, his ways,
 Then spread the rich discov'ry, and invite
 Mankind to share in the divine delight,
 Distorted from its use and just design,
 To make the pitiful possessor shine,
 To purchase at the fool frequented fair
 Of vanity, a wreath for self to wear,
 Is profanation of the basest kind,
 Proof of a trifling and a worthless mind

A Hail Sternhold then and Hopkins hail! B Amen
 If flattery, folly, lust employ the pen,
 If acrimony, slander, and abuse,
 Give it a charge to blacken and traduce,
 Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's ease,¹
 With all that fancy can invent to please,

¹ Cowper's admiration of Prior had begun in boyhood, and grown with his growth. "I learned," he said, Dec 4, 1781, "when I was a boy, being the son of a staunch Whig to glow with that patriotic enthusiasm which is apt to break forth into poetry. Prior's pieces of that sort were recommended to my particular notice." And again (January 17, 1782) — "To make verse speak the language of prose without being prosaic, to marshal the words of it in such an order as they might naturally take in falling from the lips of an extemporary speaker, yet without meanness, harmoniously, elegantly, and without seeming to displace a syllable for the sake of the rhyme, is one of the most arduous tasks a poet can undertake. He that could accomplish this task was Prior."

Adorn the polish'd periods as they fall,
One madrigal of theirs is worth them all

A 'Twould thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,
To dash the pen through all that you proscribe

B No matter—we could shift when they were not,
And should no doubt if they were all forgot

THE PROGRESS OF ERROR

Si quid loquar audiendum.—HOR Lib iv Od. 2

SING muse (if such a theme, so dark, so long,
May find a muse to grace it with a song)
By what unseem and unsuspected arts
The serpent error twines round human hearts,
Tell where she lurks, beneath what flow'ry shades,
That not a glimpse of genuine light pervades,
The pois'nous, black, insinuating worm,
Successfully conceals her loathsome form.

Take, if ye can, ye careless and supine!
Counsel and caution from a voice like mine,
Truths that the theorist could never reach,
And observation taught me, I would teach

Not all whose eloquence the fancy fills,
Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,
Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,
Can trace her mazy windings to their end,
Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,
Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure
The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,
Falls soporific on the listless ear,
Like quicksilver, the rhet'ric they display,
Shines as it runs, but grasp'd at slips away¹

Placed for his trial on this bustling stage,
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,
Free in his will to choose, or to refuse,
Man may improve the crisis, or abuse
Else, on the fatalist's unrighteous plan,
Say, to what bar amenable were man?
With nought in charge, he could betray no trust,
And, if he fell, would fall because he must,
If love reward him, or if vengeance strike,
His recompence in both, unjust alike.

¹ I think that Cowper recollected Young's most ingenious comparison of pleasure to quicksilver

Divine authority within his breast
 Brings every thought, word, action to the test
 Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains
 As reason, or as passion, takes the reins
 Hear'n from above, and conscience from within,
 Cry in his startled ear, Abstain from sin
 The world around solicits his desire,
 And kindles in his soul a treach'rous fire
 While all his purposes and steps to guard,
 Peace follows virtue as its sure reward,
 And pleasure brings as surely in her train
 Remorse, and sorrow, and vindictive pain
 Man, thus endued with an elective voice
 Must be supplied with objects of his choice
 Where'er he turns, enjoyment and delight,
 Or present, or in prospect, meet his sight,
 These open on the spot their honey'd stores,
 Those call him loudly to pursuit of more
 His unexhausted mine, the sordid vice
 Avarice shows, and virtue is the price
 Here, various motives his ambition raise,
 Pow'r, pomp, and splendour, and the thirst of praise
 There, beauty woos him with expanded arms,
 E'en Bacchanalian madness has its charms

Nor these alone, whose pleasures less refined
 Might well assuage the most unguarded mind,
 Seek to supply his unexperienced youth
 Or lead him devious from the path of truth,
 Hourly allurements on his passions press,
 Safe in themselves, but dang'rous in th' excess

Hark! how it floats upon the dewy air,
 Oh what a dying, dying close was there!
 'Tis harmony from yon sequester'd bow'r,
 Sweet harmony that soothes the midnight hour
 Long e'er the charioteer of day had run
 His morning course, th' enchantment was begun,
 And he shall gild yon mountain's height again,
 E'er yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain

Is this the rugged path, the steep ascent
 That virtue points to? Can a life thus spent
 Lead to the bliss she promises the wise,
 Detach the soul from earth, and speed her to the skies
 Ye devotees to your adored employ,
 Enthusiasts, drunk with an unreal joy,
 Love makes the music of the blest above,
 Hear'n's harmony is universal love,

And earthly sounds, though sweet and well combined,
And lenient as soft opiates to the mind,
Leave vice and folly unsubdu'd behind

Gray dawn appears, the sportsman and his train
Speckle the bosom of the distant plain,
'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighb'ring lairs,
Save that his scent is less acute than theirs,
For persevering chase, and headlong leaps,
True beagle, as the staunchest hound he keeps
Charged with the folly of his life's mad scene,
He takes offence, and wonders what you mean,
The joy, the danger, and the toil o'erpays,
'Tis exercise, and health, and length of days
Again impetuous to the field he flies,
Leaps every fence but one, there falls and dies,
Like a slain deer, the tumbrel brings him home,
Unmuss'd but by his dogs and by his groom

Ye clergy, while your orbit is your place,
Lights of the world, and stars of human race—
But if eccentric ye forsake your sphere,
Prodigious, ominous, and view'd with fear
The comet's baneful influence is a dream,
Yours real, and pernicious in th' extreme
What then—are appetites and lusts laid down
With the same ease the man puts on his gown?
Will av'rice and concupisence give place,
Charm'd by the sounds, your rev'rence, or your
grace?

No But his own engagement binds him fast,
Or if it does not, brands him to the last
What atheists call him, a designing knave
A mere church juggler, hypocrite, and slave
Oh laugh, or mourn with me, the rueful jest,
A cassock'd huntsman, and a fiddling priest,
He from Italian songsters takes his cue,
Set Paul to music, he shall quote him too
He takes the field, the master of the pack
Cries, Well done, saint—and claps him on the back
Is this the path of sanctity? Is this
To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss?
Himself a wand'rer from the narrow way,
His silly sheep, what wonder if they stray?
Go, cast your orders at your bishop's feet
Send your dishonour'd gown to Moumouth Street,
The sacred function, in your hands is made,
Sad sacrifice! no function, but a trade

Occiduus¹ is a pastor of renown,
 When he has pray'd and preach'd the sabbath down,
 With wire and catgut he concludes the day,
 Quav'ring and semiquav'ring care away
 The full concerto swells upon your ear,
 All elbows shake Look in, and you would swear
 The Babylonian tyrant with a nod
 Had summon'd them to serve his golden god,
 So well that thought th' employment seems to suit,
 Psalt'ry and sackbut, dulcimer and flute
 Oh fie! 'Tis evangelical and pure,
 Observe each face, how sober and demure,
 Ecstasy sets her stamp on ev'ry mien,
 Chins fall'n, and not an eyeball to be seen
 Still I insist, though music heretofore
 Has charm'd me much, not ev'n Occiduus more,
 Love, joy, and peace, make harmony, more meet
 For sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet
 Will not the sickliest sheep of ev'ry flock,
 Resort to this example as a rock,
 There stand and justify the foul abuse
 Of sabbath hours, with plausible excuse?
 If apostolic gravity be free
 To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?
 If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
 As inoffensive, what offence in cards?
 Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay,
 Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.
 Oh Italy! Thy sabbaths will be soon
 Our sabbaths, closed with mumm'ry and buffoon,
 Preaching and pranks will share the motley scene,
 Ours parcell'd out, as thine have ever been,
 God's worship and the mountebank between

1 "I am sorry to find that the censure I have passed upon Occiduus is even better founded than I supposed. Lady Austen has been at his sabbatical concerts, which, it seems, are composed of song tunes and of psalm tunes indiscriminately—music without words, and I suppose I may say, consequently, without devotion. He seems to have suffered considerably in his spiritual character by his attachment to music" (To Mr Newton, Sept. 9, 1781) "Occiduus" was CHARLES WESLEY, one of the religious rivals of Whitefield. Charles had a livelier temperament than his brother. In the earlier days of their religious ardour they were accustomed to spend part of the Sunday in country walks and singing of psalms. Upon one occasion, when they were beginning to set a stage, a sense of the ridiculous situation came upon Charles, and he burst into loud laughter. "I asked him," says John, "if he was distracted, and began to be very angry, and presently after to laugh as loud as he. Nor could we possibly refrain, though we were ready to tear ourselves in pieces; but were forced to go home without singing another line."

What says the prophet? Let that day be blest
 With holiness and consecrated rest,
 Pastime and bus'ness both it should exclude,
 And bar the door the moment they intrude,
 Nobly distinguish'd above all the six,
 By deeds in which the world must never mix
 Hear him again—He calls it a delight,¹
 A day of luxury, observed aright,
 When the glad soul is made luxury's welcome guest,
 Sit banqueting, and God provides the feast.
 But trailers are engorged and cannot come,
 Their answer to the call is—*Not at home*

Oh the dear pleasures of the velvet plain,
 The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again
 Cards with what rapture and the polish'd die,
 The yawning chasm of indolence supply
 Then to the dance, and make the sober moon
 Witness of joys that shun the sight of noon
 Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,
 The snug close party, or the splendid hall
 Where night, down stooping from her ebony throne,
 Views constellations brighter than her own
 'Tis innocent and harmless and refined,
 The balm of care, elysium of the mind
 Innocent! Oh if venerable time
 Slain at the foot of pleasure, be no crime,
 Then with his silver beard and magic wand,
 Let Comus² rise Archbishop of the land,
 Let him your rubric and your feasts prescribe,
 Grand metropolitan of all the tribe

Of manners rough, and coarse athletic cast,
 The rank debauch suits Clodio's filthy taste
 Rutillus, exquisitely form'd by rule,
 Not of the moral, but the dancing school,
 Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone
 As trivial as others at his own
 He cannot drink five bottles, bill the score,
 Then kill a constable, and drink five more,
 But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,
 And has the ladies' etiquette by heart
 Go fool, and, arm in arm with Clodio, plead
 Your cause before a bar you little dread,

¹ "Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you"—

Exodus xxxi. 13

² Isaiah liii. 13, 14

³ The god of night-feasting, whose torch falling from his hand was the emblem of his riot.

But know, the law that bids the drunkard die
Is far too just to pass the trader by
Both baby featured and of infant size,
View'd from a distance, and with heedless eyes,
Folly and innocence are so alike,
The difference, though essential, fails to strike
Yet folly ever has a vacant stare,
A stupring countenance, a trifling air,
But innocence sedate, serene, erect,
Delights us, by engaging our respect
Man, nature's guest by invitation sweet,
Receives from her both appetite and treat,
But if he play the glutton and exceed,
His benefactress blushes at the deed.
For nature, nice, as lib'ral to dispense,
Made nothing but a brute the slave of sense
Daniel ate pulse by choice, example rare!
Heav'n bless'd the youth, and made him fresh and

Rejoice the frail egg by pleasure laid
 In every bosom where her nest is made,
 Hatch'd by the beams of truth denies him rest,
 And proves a raging scorpion in his breast
 No pleasure? Are domestic comforts dead?
 Are all the nardines sweets of friendship fled?
 Has time worn out, or fashion put to shame
 Good sense, good health, good conscience, and good
 fame?

All this belongs to virtue, and all prove
 That virtue has a title to your love
 Have you no touch of pity, that the poor
 Stand starv'd at your inhospitable door?
 Or if yourself too scantily supplied
 Need help, let honest industry provide
 I am, if you want, if you abound, impart,
 These both are pleasures to the feeling heart
 No pleasure? Has some sickly eastern waste
 Sent us a wind to parch us at a blast?
 Can British paradise no scenes afford
 To please her satiate and indifferent lord?
 Are sweet philosophy's enjoyments run
 Quite to the lee? And has religion none?
 Brutes capable, should tell you 'tis a lie,
 And judge you from the kennel and the sty
 Delight like these, ye sensual and profane,
 Ye are but begg'd besought to entertain,
 Call'd to these crystal streams, do ye turn off
 Obsecrate, to swill and wallow at a trough?
 Pity the beast, then on whom heav'n bestows
 Your pleasures, with no curses in the close

Pleasure admitted in undue degree
 Enslaves the will, nor leaves the judgment free
 'Tis not alone the grape's enticing juice,
 Unnerves the moral pow'rs, and mars their use,
 Ambition, avarice, and the lust of fame,
 And woman, lovely woman, does the same
 The heart, surrender'd to the ruling pow'r
 Of some ungovern'd passion ev'ry hour,
 Finds by degrees the truths that once bore sway,
 And all their deep impression wear away
 So corn grows smooth in traffic current pass'd,
 Till Caesar's image is effac'd at last¹

The breach, though small at first, soon op'ning wide,
 In ruins fully with a full-moon tide

Then welcome errors of whatever size,
 To justify it by a thousand lies
 As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,
 And hides the ruin that it feeds upon,
 So sophistry cleaves close to, and protects
 Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects
 Mortals whose pleasures are their only care,
 First wish to be imposed on, and then are,
 And, lest the fulsome artifice should fail,
 Themselves will hide its coarseness with a veil.
 Not more industrious are the just and true
 To give to virtue what is virtue's due,
 The praise of wisdom, comeliness, and worth,
 And call her charms to public notice forth,
 Than vice's mean and disingenuous race,
 To hide the shocking features of her face
 Her form with dress and lotion they repair,
 Then kiss their idol and pronounce her fair

The sacred implement I now employ
 Might prove a mischance, or at best a toy,
 A trifle if it more but to amuse,
 But if to wrong the judgment and abuse,
 Worse than a poniard in the bravest hand,
 It strikes at once the morals of a land

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,
 Footing it in the dance that fancy leads,
 Ye poets who mar what ye would mend,
 Sawing and driv'ling folly without end,
 Whose corresponding muses fill the room
 With sentimental trippery and dream,

Such writers and such readers owe the gust
And relish of their pleasure all to lust

But the muse, eagle-pinion'd, has in view
A quarry more important still than you,
Down, down the wind she swims and sails away,
Now stoops upon it, and now grasps the prey

Petronius!¹ all the muses weep for thee,
But ev'ry tear shall scald thy memory
The graces too, while virtue at their shrine
Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,
Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,
Abhorr'd the sacrifice, and cursed the priest
Thou polish'd and high-finish'd foe to truth,
Gray beard corrupter of our list'ning youth,
To purge and skim away the filth of vice,
That so refined it might the more entice,
Then pour it on the morals of thy son
To taint *his* heart, was worthy of *thine own*
Now while the poison all high life pervades,
Write, if thou canst, one letter from the shades,
One, and one only, charged with deep regret,
That thy worst part, thy principles live yet,
One sad epistle thence may cure mankind
Of the plague spread by bundles left behind

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,
Our most important are our earliest years,
The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,
And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue
That education gives her, false or true
Plants raised with tenderness are seldom strong,
Man's coltish disposition asks the thong,
And without discipline the fav'rite child,
Like a neglected forester, runs wild
But we, as if good qualities would grow
Spontaneous, take but little pains to sow,
We give some Latin and a smatch² of Greek,
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week,
And having done, we think, the best we can,
Praise his proficiency, and dub him man

From school to Cam or Isis, and thence home
And thence with all convenient speed to Rome

¹ Lord Chesterfield and his Letters

² Cowper remembered Shakspeare's

"—— life that had some smatch of honour in it,"

With res'rend tutor, clad in habit lay,
 To tence for cash and quarrel with all day
 With memorandum book for ev'ry town,
 And ev'ry post, and where the chaise broke down
 His stock, a few French phrases got by heart,
 With much to learn, but nothing to impart,
 The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,
 Set off a wand'rer into foreign lands,
 Surprised at all they meet, the gosling pair
 With awkward gait, stretch'd neck, and silly stare
 Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,
 And steeples towering high, much like our own,
 But show peculiar light by many a grin,
 At Popish practices observed within

Ireland some bowing, smirking, smart Abbé
 Marks two lost rers that have lost their way.
 And being always primed with *politesse*
 For men of their appearance and address,
 With much compression undertakes the task,
 To tell them more than they have wit to ask,
 Points to inscriptions wheresoe'er they tread,
 Such as when legible, were never read,
 But being rubb'd now, and half worn out,
 Create querulous brains with endless doubt
 Some headless hero, or some Caesar shows,
 He figures only in his Roman nose,
 Exhibes elevations, drawings, plans,
 Models of Herculean pots and pans,
 And tells them many tales, which, if neither rare
 Nor ancient, will be so, preserved with care
 To guard the royal from whatever cause

Accomplishments have taken virtue's place,
 And wisdom falls before exterior grace,
 We slight the precious kernel of the stone,
 And toil to polish its rough coat alone
 A just deportment, manners graced with ease,
 Elegant phrase, and figure form'd to please,
 Are qualities that seem to comprehend
 Whatever parents, guardians, schools intend,
 Hence an unfurnish'd and a listless mind,
 Though busy, trifling, empty, though refined,
 Hence all that interferes, and dares to clash
 With indolence and luxury, is trash,
 While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,
 Seems verging fast towards the female side

Learning itself, received into a mind
 By nature weak, or viciously inclined,
 Serves but to lead philosophers astray
 Where children would with ease discern the way,
 And of all arts sagacious dupes invent
 To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent,
 The worst is Scripture warp'd from its intent

The carriage bowls along and all are pleased
 If Tom be sober, and the wheels well greased,
 But if the rogue have gone a cup too far,
 Left out his linchpin, or forgot his tar,
 It suffers interruption and delay,
 And meets with hindrance in the smoothest way
 When some hypothesis absurd and vain
 Has fill'd with all its fumes a critic's brain,
 The text that sorts not with his darling whim,
 Though plain to others, is obscure to him
 The will made subject to a lawless force,
 All is irregular, and out of course,
 And judgment drunk, and bribed to lose his way,
 Winks hard, and talks of darkness at noonday.
 A critic, on the sacred book, should be
 Candid and learn'd, dispassionate and free
 Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,
 From fancy's influence, and intemp'rate zeal
 But, above all, (or let the wretch refrain,
 Nor touch the page he cannot but profane,)
 Free from the domineering pow'r of lust,
 A lewd interpreter is never just

How shall I speak thee, or thy pow'r address
 Thou god of our idolatry, the Press?

By thee, religion, liberty, and laws,
Exert their influence, and advance their cause,
By thee worse plagues, than Pharaoh's land beset,
Diffused, make earth the vestibule of hell
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise,
Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies,
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest,
Till half mankind were like himself possess'd
Philosophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt,
Church quacks, with passions under no command,
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
Discoverers of they know not what, confined
Within no bounds, the blind that lead the blind,
To streams of popular opinion drawn,
Deposit in those shallows all their spawn
The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around
Pois'ning the waters where their swarms abound,
Scorn'd by the nobler tenants of the flood,
Minnows and gudgeons gorge th' unwholesome food
The propagated myriads spread so fast,
E'en Lewenhoeek¹ himself would stand aghast,
Employ'd to calculate the enormous sum,
And own his crab computing pow'rs o'ercome
Is this hyperbole? The world well known,
Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one

Fresh confidence the speculatist takes
From every hair brain'd proselyte he makes,
And therefore prints Himself but half deceived,
'Till others have the soothing tale believed
Hence comment after comment, spun as fine
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line
Hence the same word that bids our lusts obey,
Is misapplied to sanctify their sway
If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,
Hebrew or Syriac shall be forced to bend,
If languages and copies all cry, No—
Somebody proved it centuries ago
Like trout pursued, the critic, in despair,
Darts to the mud and finds his safety there

¹ A Dutch naturalist, born at Delft in 1632. With single lenses, of
extreme polish, he made some very curious microscopic investigations. In
1698 he showed to Peter the Great the circulation of the blood in the tail of
an eel. He died in 1723.

Women, whom custom has forbid to fly
 The scholar's patch (the scholar best knows why),
 With all the simple and unletter'd poor,
 Admire his learning, and almost adore
 Whoever errs, the priest can ne'er be wrong,
 With such fine words familiar to his tongue

'Ye ladies' (for, indifferent in your cause,
 I should deserve to forfeit all applause,)
 Whatever shocks, or gives the least offence
 To virtue, delicacy, truth, or sense,
 (Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide,)
 Nor has, nor can have Scripture or its side

None but an author knows an author's cares,
 Or fancy's fondness for the child she bears
 Committed once into the public arms,
 The baby seems to smile with added charms,
 Like something precious ventured far from shore,
 'Tis valued for the danger's sake the more
 He views it with complacency supreme,
 Solicits kind attention to his dream,
 And dail' more enamour'd of the cheat,
 Kneels, and asks Heav'n to bless the dear deceit,
 So one,¹ whose story serves at least to show
 Men loved their own productions long ago,
 Woo'd an unfeeling statue for his wife,
 Nor rested till the gods had giv'n it life
 If some more driv'ler suck the sugar'd sib,
 One that still needs his leading string and bib,
 And praise his genius, he is soon repaid
 In praise applied to the same part, his head,
 For 'tis a rule that holds for ever true,
 Grant me discernment, and I grant it you

Patient of contradiction as a child,
 Affable, humble, dissident, and mild,
 Such was Sir Isaac,² and such Boyle, and Locke
 Your blund'rer is as sturdy as a rock,
 The creature is so sure to kick and bite,
 A mulcteer's the man to set him right
 First appetite enlists him truth's sworn foe,
 Then obstinate self-will confirms him so

Tell him he wanders, that his error leads
 To fatal ill, that though the path he treads

¹ Pygmalion, a sculptor of Cyprus, who, becoming enamoured of a marble statue, prevailed on Venus to turn it into a woman, whom he married
² Newton.

Be flow'ry, and he see no cause of fear,
 Death and the pains of hell attend him there;
 In vain, the slave of arrogance and pride,
 He has no hearing on the prudent side
 His still refuted quirks he still repents,
 New-raised objections with new quibbles meets,
 Till, sinking in the quicksand he defends,
 He dies disputing, and the contest ends,
 But not the mischiefs they still left behind,
 Like thistle seeds are sown by every wind

Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill,
 Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will,
 And, with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
 First put it out, then take it for a guide
 Halting on crutches of unequal size,
 One leg by truth supported, one by lies,
 They sidle to the goal with awkward paces,
 Secure of nothing but to lose the race

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
 And these, reciprocally, those again
 The mind and conduct mutually imprint
 And stamp their image in each other's mint
 Each, sire and dam, of an infernal race,
 Begetting and conceiving all that's base

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
 Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue
 For though e'er yet the shaft is on the wing,
 Or when it first forsakes th' elastic string,
 It err but little from th' intended line,
 It falls at last far wide of his design
 So he that seeks a mansion in the sky,
 Must watch his purpose with a steadfast eye,
 That prize belongs to none but the sincere,
 The least obliquity is fatal here

With caution taste the sweet Circean cup,
 He that sips often, at last drinks it up
 Habits are soon assumed, but when we strive
 To strip them off, 'tis being flay'd alive
 Call'd to the temple of impure delight,
 He that abstains, and he alone does right
 If a wish wander that way call it home,
 He cannot long be safe, whose wishes roam
 But if you pass the threshold, you are caught.
 Die then, if pow'r Almighty save you not
 There hard'ning by degrees, till double steel'd
 Take leave of nature's God, and God reveal'd.

Then laugh at all you trembled at before,
 And, joining the freethinkers' brutal roar
 Swallow the two grand nostrums they dispense,
 That Scripture lies, and blasphemy is sense
 If clemency revolted by abuse
 Be damnable, then damn'd without excuse.

Some dream that they can silence when they wil
 The storm of passion, and say, "Peace, be still,"
 But "Thus far and no farther," when address'd
 To the wild wave, or wilder human breast,
 Implies authority that never can,
 That never ought to be the lot of man

But, muse, forbear, long flights forebode a fall,
 Strike on the deep toned chord the sum of all

Hear the just law, the judgment of the skies!
 He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies
 And he that will be cheated to the last,
 Delusions, strong as hell, shall bind him fast
 But if the wand'rer his mistake discern,
 Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,
 Bewild'ring'd once, must he bewail his loss,
 For ever and for ever? No—the Cross
 There, and there only (though the deist rave,
 And atheist, if earth bear so base a slave),
 There, and there only, is the power to save.
 There no delusive hope invites despair,
 No mock'ry meets you, no deception there,
 The spells and charms that blinded you before,
 All vanish there, and fascinate no more

I am no preacher, let this hint suffice,
 The Cross once seen, is death to ev'ry vice
 Else He that hung there suffer'd all His pain,
 Bled, groan'd, and agonized, and died in vain

TRUTH.

Poenitentia trinitas

Hor. Lab. il Ep. i.

MAN, on the dubious waves of error toss'd,
 His ship half founder'd and his compass lost,
 Sees, far as human optics may command,
 A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land
 Spreads all his canvass, ev'ry sinew plies,
 Pante for it aims at it, enters it and dies

Then farewell all self satisfying schemes
 His well built systems, phleopluic dreams,
 Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell !
 He reads his sentence at the flames of hell

Hard lot of man ! to toil for the reward
 Of virtue, and yet lose it—wherefore hard ?
 He, that would win the race, must guide his horse
 Obedient to the customs of the course,
 Else, though unequal'd to the goal he flies,
 A meaner than himself shall gain the prize
 Grace leads the right way, if you choose the wrong,
 Take it and perish, but restrain your tongue,
 Charge not, with light sufficient and left free,
 Your wilful suicide on God's decree

Oh how unlike the complex works of man,
 Heaven's easy, artless, unencumber'd plan !
 No meretricious graces to beguile,
 No clust'ring ornaments to clog the pile,
 From ostentation as from weakness free,
 It stands like the cerulean arch we see,
 Majestic in its own simplicity
 Inscribed above the portal, from afar
 Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
 Legible only by the light they give,
 Stand the soul quick'ning words—BELIEVE AND LIVE
 Too many, shock'd at what should charm them most,
 Despise the plain direction and are lost
 Heav'n on such terms ! they cry with proud disdain,
 Incredible, impossible, and vain—
 Rebel because 'tis easy to obey,
 And scorn for its own sake the gracious way.
 These are the sober, in whose cooler brains
 Some thought of immortality remains,
 The rest, too busy or too gay to wait
 On the sad theme, their everlasting state,
 Sport for a day and perish in a night,
 The foam upon the waters not so light

Who judged the Pharisee ? What odious cause
 Exposed him to the vengeance of the laws ?
 Had he seduced a virgin, wrong'd a friend,
 Or stabb'd a man to serve some private end ?
 Was blasphemy his sin ? Or did he stray
 From the strict duties of the sacred day ?
 Sit long and late at the carousing board ?
 (Such were the sins with which he charged his
 Lord)

No—the man's morals were exact, what then ?
 'Twas his ambition to be seen of men,
 His virtues were his pride, and that one vice
 Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price,
 He wore them as fine trappings for a show,
 A praying, synagogue-frequenting beau
 The self-applauding bird, the peacock see—
 Mark what a sumptuous Pharisee is he !
 Meridian sunbeams tempt him to unfold
 His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold,
 He treads as if, some solemn music near,
 His measured step were govern'd by his ear,
 And seems to say, Ye meaner fowl, give place,
 I am all splendour, dignity, and grace

Not so the pheasant on his charms presumes,
 Though he, too, has a glory in his plumes,
 He, Christian-like, retreats with modest mien,
 To the close copse or far sequester'd green,
 And shines without desiring to be seen.
 The plea of works, as arrogant and vain,
 Heav'n turns from with abhorrence and disdain.
 Not more affronted by avow'd neglect,
 Than by the mere dissembler's feign'd respect
 What is all righteousness that men devise,
 What, but a sordid bargain for the skies ?
 But Christ as soon would abdicate his own,
 As stoop from heav'n to sell the proud a throne

His dwelling a recess in some rude rock,
 Book, beads, and maple dish his meagre stock,
 In shirt of hair and weeds of canvass dress'd,
 Girt with a bell-rope that the Pope has bless'd.
 Adust¹ with stripes told out for ev'ry crime,
 And sore tormented long before his time,
 His prayer preferr'd to saints that cannot aid,
 His praise postponed, and never to be paid,
 See the sage hermit by mankind admired,
 With all that bigotry adopts, inspired,
 Wearing out life in his religious whim,
 'Till his religious whimsy wears out him
 His works, his abstinence, his zeal allow'd,
 You think him humble, God accounts him proud
 High in demand, though lowly in pretence,
 Of all his conduct, thus the genuine sense—
 My penitential stripes, my streaming blood
 Have purchased heav'n, and prove my title good.

¹ Burnt up Dryden has "choler adust."

Turn eastward now, and fancy shall apply,
 To your weak sight her telescopic eye
 The Bramin kindles on his own bare head
 The sacred fire, self-torturing his trade,
 His voluntary pains, severe and long,
 Would give a barb'rous air to British song,
 Nor grand inquisitor could worse invent,
 Than he contrives to suffer, well content
 Which is the santher worthr of the two?
 Past all dispute, yon anchorite say you
 Your sentence and mine differ What's a name?
 I say the Bramin has the fairer claim.
 If sufferings, Scripture nowhere recommends,
 Devised by self to answer selfish ends
 Give saintship, then all Europe must agree,
 Ten starveling hermits suffer less than he
 The truth is (if the truth may suit your ear,
 And prejudices have left a passage clear)
 Pride has attain'd its most luxuriant growth,
 And poison'd every virtue in them both
 Pride may be pamper'd while the flesh grows lean,
 Humility may clothe an English Dean,
 That grace was Cowper's—his confess'd by all—
 Though plac'd in golden Durham's second stall
 Not all the plenty of a Bishop's board,
 His palaco, and his lackeys, and, 'my Lord!
 More nourish pride, that condescending vice,
 Than abstinence, and beggary, and hee
 It thrives in misery, and abundant grows
 In misery fools upon themselves impose
 But why before us Protestants produce
 An Indian mystic, or a French recluse?
 Their sin is plain, but what have we to fear,
 Reform'd and well instructed? You shall hear
 Yon ancient prudo, whose wither'd features show
 She might be young some forty years ago,
 Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,
 Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
 Her eyebrows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray
 To watch yon am'rous couple in their play,
 With bony and unkerchief'd neck defies
 The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
 And sails with lappet-head and mincing airs,
 Duty at clink of bell, to morning pray'rs
 To thrust and parsimony much inclined,
 She yet allows herself that boy behind.

The shiv'ring urchin, bending as he goes,
 With slipshod heels, and dewdrop at his nose,
 His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,
 Which future pages are yet doom'd to share,
 Carries her Bible tuck'd beneath his arm,
 And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm

She, half an angel in her own account,
 Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,
 Though not a grace appears on strictest search
 But that she fasts, and item, goes to church
 Conscious of age, she recollects her youth,
 And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
 Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er he cam.
 Scrawl'd upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name,
 Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,
 And drank the little bumper ev'ry day
 Of temper as envenom'd as an asp,
 Censorious, and her every word a wasp,
 In faithful mem'ry she records the crimes
 Or real, or fictitious, of the times,
 Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
 And holds them dangling at arm's length in scorn

Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,
 Of malice fed while flesh is mortified.
 Take, Madam, the reward of all your pray'rs,
 Where hermits and where Bramins meet with theirs
 Your portion is with them nay, never frown,
 But, if you please, some fathoms lower down

Artist attend—your brushes and your paint—
 Produce them—take a chair—now draw a Saint
 Oh sorrowful and sad! the streaming tears
 Channel her cheeks, a Niobe appears
 Is this a Saint? Throw tints and all away,
 True piety is cheerful as the day,
 Will weep indeed, and heave a pitying groan
 For others' woes, but smiles upon her own

What purpose has the King of Saints in view?
 Why falls the Gospel like a gracious dew?
 To call up plenty from the teeming earth,
 Or curse the desert with a tenfold dearth?
 Is it that Adam's offspring may be saved
 From servile fear, or be the more enslaved?
 To loose the links that gall'd mankind before,
 Or bind them faster on, and add still more?
 The freeborn Christian has no chains to prove,
 Or if a chain, the golden one of love,

No fear attends to quench his glowing fire,
 What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.
 Shall he for such deliverance freely wrought,
 Recompense ill? He trembles at the thought
 His master's int'rest and his own combined
 Prompt ev'ry movement of his heart and mind;
 Thought, word, and deed, his liberty evince,
 His freedom is the freedom of a prince

Man's obligations infinite, of course
 His life should prove that he perceives their force,
 His utmost he can render is but small,
 The principle and motive all in all
 You have two servants—Tom, an arch, sly rogue,
 From top to toe the Geta now in vogue,
 Genteel in figure, easy in address,
 Moves without noise, and swift as an express,
 Reports a message with a pleasing grace,
 Expert in all the duties of his place
 Say, on what lunge does his obedience move?
 Has he a world of gratitude and love?
 No, not a spark—'tis all mere sharper's play;
 He likes your house, your housemaid, and your
 pay,

Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,
 Tom quits you, with, Your most obedient, Sir—
 The dinner served, Charles takes his usual stand,
 Watches your eye, anticipates command,
 Sighs if perhaps your appetite should fail,
 And, if he but suspects a frown, turns pale,
 Consults all day your int'rest and your ease,
 Richly rewarded if he can but please,
 And proud to make his firm attachment known,
 To save your life would nobly risk his own
 Now, which stands highest in your serious thought?
 Charles, without doubt, say you—and so he ought,
 One act that from a thankful heart proceeds,
 Excels ten thousand mercenary deeds
 Thus Heav'n approves, as honest and sincere,
 The work of gen'rous love and filial fear,
 But with averted eyes th' omniscient Judge,
 Scorns the base hureling and the slavish drudge
 Where dwell these matchless saints? Old Curio cries—
 Ev'n at your side, Sir, and before your eyes,
 The favour'd few, th' enthusiasts you despise,
 And pleased at heart because on holy ground,
 Sometimes a canting hypocrite is found,

Reproach a people with his angle fall,
 And cast his filthy raiment at them all.
 Attend—an apt similitude shall show,
 Whence springs the conduct that offends you so.
 See where it smokes along the sounding plain,
 Blown all afloat, a driving, dashing rain,
 Peal upon peal redoubling all around,
 Shakes it again and faster to the ground,
 Now flashing wide, now glancing as in play,
 Swift beyond thought the lightnings dart away;
 Ere yet it came the traveller urged his steed,
 And hurried, but with unsuccessful speed,
 No more drench'd throughout, and hopeless of his ease
 He drops the rein, and leaves him to his fate,
 Suppose, unlook'd for in a scene so rude,
 Long hid by interposing hill or wood,
 Some mansion neat and elegantly dress'd,
 By some kind hospitable heart possess'd,
 Offer him warmth, security, and rest,
 Think with what pleasure, ease and at his ease,
 He hears the tempest howling in the trees,
 What glowing thanks his lips and heart employ
 While danger past is turn'd to present joy
 So fares it with the sinner when he feels,
 A growing dread of vengeance at his heels,
 His conscience, like a glassy lake before,
 Lash'd into foaming waves begins to roar,
 The law grown clamorous, though silent long,
 Arraigns him, charges him with every wrong,
 Asserts the rights of his offended Lord,
 And death, or restitution, is the word,
 The last impossible, he fears the first,
 And having well deserved, expects the worst
 Then welcome refuge, and a peaceful home,
 Oh for a shelter from the wrath to come!
 Crush me ye rocks, ye falling mountains hide.
 Or bury me in ocean's angry tide—
 The scrutiny of those all seeing eyes
 I dare not—and you need not, God replies,
 The remedy you want I freely give,
 The Book shall teach you, read, believe, and live
 'Tis done—the raging storm is heard no more,
 Mercy receives him on her peaceful shore,
 And justice, guardian of the dread command,
 Drops the red vengeance from his willing hand

A soul redeem'd demands a life of praise,
 Hence the complexion of his future days,
 Hence a demeanour holy and unspeak'd,
 And the world's hatred as its sure effect

Some lead a life unblamable and just
 Their own dear virtue, their unshaken trust
 They never sin—or if (as all offend)
 Some trivial slips their daily walk attend,
 The poor are near at hand, the charge is small.
 A slight gratuity atones for all
 For though the Pope has lost his int'rest here,
 And pardons are not sold as once they were,
 No papist more desirous to compound,
 Than some grave sinners upon English ground
 That plea refuted, other quirk- they seek.
 Mercy is infinite and man is weak,
 The future shall obliterate the past
 And heav'n no doubt shall be their home at last.

Come then—a still, small whisper in your ear,
 He has no hope that never had a fear,
 And he that never doubted of his state,
 He may perhaps—perhaps he may—too late
 The path to bliss abounds with many a snare,
 Learning is one, and wit, however rare
 The Frenchman first in literary fame,
 (Mention him if you please—Voltaire? the same)
 With spirit, genius, eloquence supplied,
 Lived long, wrote much, laugh'd heartily, and died
 The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Christian and the Jew
 An infidel in health, but what when sick?
 Oh then a text would touch him at the quick
 View him at Paris in his last career,
 Surrounding throngs the demi god revere,
 Exalted on his pedestal of pride,
 And fumed with frankincense on ev'ry side,
 He begs their flattery with his latest breath
 And, smother'd in't at last, is praised to death
 Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
 Pillow and bobbins all her little store,
 Content though mean, and cheerful, if not gay
 Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,
 Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
 Lies down secure, her heart and soul at light,
 She for her humble sphere by nature fit,
 Has little understanding, and no wit,

Receives no praise, but (though her lot be such,
Toilsome and indigent) she renders much,
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew,
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies

Oh happy peasant¹ Oh unhappy bard¹
His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward
He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
She never heard of half a mile from home,
He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
She safe in the simplicity of hers

Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound
In science, win one inch of heav'nly ground
And is it not a mortifying thought
The poor should gain it, and the rich should not?
No—the voluptuaries, who ne'er forget
One pleasure lost, lose heav'n without regret,
Regret would rouse them and give birth to pray'r,
Pray'r would add faith, and faith would fix them there.

Not that the Former of us all in this,
Or aught he does is govern'd by caprice,
The supposition is replete with sin,
And bears the brand of blasphemy burnt in
Not so—the silver trumpet's heav'nly call,
Sounds for the poor, but sounds alike for all,
Kings are invited, and would kings obey,
No slaves on earth more welcome were than they,
But royalty, nobility, and state,
Are such a dead preponderating weight,
That endless bliss, (how strange soe'er it seem,)
In counterpoise, flies up and kicks the beam
'Tis open and ye cannot enter—why?
Because ye will not, Conyers¹ would reply—
And he says much that many may dispute
And cavil at with ease, but none refute
Oh bless'd effect of penury and want,
The seed sown there, how vigorous is the plant!
No soil like poverty for growth divine,
As leanest land supplies the richest wine

¹ I suppose the allusion is to Dr Richard Conyers, rector of St. Paul's, Deptford, on whose death Mr Newton preached a sermon, May 7, 1786. One passage is singularly applicable to Cowper himself—"Through the agitation of his spirits, he spent his days, and almost every hour, in trepidation and alarm. The slightest incidents were sufficient to fill him with fears, which, though he knew to be groundless, he could not overcome"—page 23

Earth gives too little, giving only bread,
 To nourish pride, or turn the wial est head;
 To them, the sounding jargon of the schools
 Seems what it is, a cry and bells for fools,
 The light they walk by, kindled from above,
 Shows them the shortest way to life and love
 They, strangers to the controversial field,
 Where deists always soil'd, yet scorn to yield,
 And never check'd by what impedes the wise,
 Believe, rush forward, and possess the prize

Envy ye great the dull unletter'd small,
 Ye have much cause for envy—but not all,
 We boast some rich ones whom the Gospel sways,
 And one that wears a coronet and prays
 Like gleanings of an olive-tree they show,
 Here and there one upon the topmost bough.

How readily upon the Gospel plan,
 That question has its answer—what is man?
 Sinful and weak, in ev'ry sense a wretch,
 An instrument whose chords upon the stretch,
 And strain'd to the last screw that he can bear,
 Yield only discord in his Maker's ear
 Once the blest residence of truth divine,
 Glorious as Solyma's interior shrine,
 Where in his own oracular abode,
 Dwelt visibly the light-creating God,
 But made long since, like Babylon of old,
 A den of mischiefs never to be told
 And she, once mistress of the realms around,
 Now scatter'd wide and nowhere to be found,
 As soon shall rise and reascend the throne,
 By native pow'r and energy her own,
 As nature, at her own peculiar cost,
 Restore to man the glories he has lost.
 Go bid the winter cease to chill the year,
 Replace the wand'ring comet in his sphere,
 Then boast (but wait for that unhop'd-for hour)
 The self-restoring arm of human pow'r
 But what is man in his own proud esteem?
 Hear him, himself the poet and the theme,
 A monarch clothed with majesty and awe,
 His mind his kingdom, and his will his law,
 Grace in his mien and glory in his eyes,
 Supreme on earth and worthy of the skies,
 Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,
 And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a god.

So sings he, charm'd with his own mind and form
 The song magnificent, the theme a worm
 Himself so much the source of his delight,
 His Maker has no beauty in his sight
 See where he sits, contemplative and fix'd,
 Pleasure and wonder in his features mix'd,
 His passions tamed and all at his control,
 How perfect the composure of his soul !
 Complacency has breathed a gentle gale
 O'er all his thoughts, and swell'd his easy sail
 His books well trimm'd and in the gayest style,
 Like regimental cockcombs, rank and file,
 Adorn his intellects as well as shelves,
 And teach him notions splendid as themselves :
 The Bible only stands neglected there,
 Though that of all most worthy of his care,
 And like an infant, troublesome awake,
 Is left to sleep for peace and quiet sake

What shall the man deserve of human kind,
 Whose happy skill and industry combined,
 Shall prove (what argument could never yet)
 The Bible an imposture and a cheat ?
 The praises of the libertine profess'd,
 The worst of men, and curses of the best
 Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes,
 The dying, trembling at their awful close,
 Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd,
 The thousands whom the world forbids to rest,
 Where should they find (those comforts at an end
 The Scripture yields) or hope to find a friend ?
 Sorrow might muse herself to madness then,
 And, seeking exile from the sight of men,
 Bury herself in solitude profound,
 Grow frantic with her pangs, and bite the ground
 Thus often unbelief, grown sick of life,
 Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife,
 The jury meet, the coroner is short,
 And lunacy the verdict of the court
 Reverse the sentence, let the truth be known,
 Such lunacy is ignorance alone,
 They knew not, what some bishops may not know,
 That Scripture is the only cure of woe
 That field of promise, how it flings abroad
 Its odour o'er the Christian's thorny road ;
 The soul, reposing on assured relief,
 Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,

Forgets her labour as she toils along,
 Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song
 But the same word, that, like the polish'd share,
 Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,
 Kills, too, the flow'ry weeds where'er they grow,
 That bind the sinner's Bacchanalian brow.
 Oh that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,
 Sad messenger of mercy from above,
 How does it grate upon his thankless ear,
 Crippling his pleasures with the cramp of fear!
 His will and judgment at continual strife,
 That civil war embitters all his life,
 In vain he points his pow'rs against the skies,
 In vain he closes or averts his eyes
 Truth will intrude—she bids him get beware—
 And shakes the sceptic in the scorner's chair
 Though various foes against the truth combine
 Pride above all opposes her design,
 Pride of a growth superior to the rest,
 The subtlest serpent, with the lofliest crest,
 Swells at the thought, and kindling into rage,
 Would hiss the cherub Mercy from the stage
 And is the soul indeed so lost, she cries,
 Fall'n from her glory and too weak to rise,
 Torpid and dull beneath a frozen zone,
 Has she no spark that may be deem'd her own?
 Grant her indebted to what zealots call
 Grace undeserved, yet surely not for all—
 Some beams of rectitude she yet displays,
 Some love of virtue, and some pow'r to praise
 Can lift herself above corporeal things,
 And soaring on her own unborrow'd wings
 Possess herself of all that's good or true,
 Assert the skies, and vindicate her due
 Past indiscretion is a venial crime,
 And if the youth, unmellow'd yet by time,
 Bore on his branch, luxuriant, and rude,
 Fruits of a blighted size, austere and crude
 Maturer years shall happier stores produce
 And meliorate the well concocted juice
 Then conscious of her meritorious zeal,
 To Justice she may make her bold appeal
 And leave to Mercy with a tranquil mind,
 The worthless and unfruitful of mankind
 Hear then how Mercy slighted and defied,
 Retorts th' affront against the crown of pride

Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorr'd
 And the fool with it that insults his Lord
 Th' atonement a Redeemer's love has wrought
 Is not for you, the righteous need it not
 See'st thou yon harlot wooing all she meets,
 The worn out nuisance of the public streets,
 Herself from morn to night, from night to morn,
 Her own abhorrence, and as much your scorn
 The gracious shower, unlimited and free,
 Shall fall on her, when Heav'n denies it thee
 Of all that wisdom dictates, thus the drift,
 That man is dead in sin, and life a gift

Is virtue then, unless of Christian growth,
 Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both,
 Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,
 For ignorance of what they could not know?
 That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue,
 Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong,
 Truly not I—the partial light men have,
 My creed persuades me, well employ'd may save,
 While he that scorns the noonday beam perverse,
 Shall find the blessing, unimproved, a curse
 Let heathen worthies, whose exalted mind
 Left sensuality and dross behind,
 Possess for me their undisputed lot,
 And take unenvied the reward they sought
 But still in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
 Not blind by choice, but destined not to see,
 Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
 Celestial, though they knew not whence it came,
 Derived from the same source of light and grace
 That guides the Christian in his swifter race;
 Their judge was conscience, and her rule their law,
 That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,
 Led them, however falt'ring, faint and slow,
 From what they knew, to what they wish'd to know;
 But let not him that shares a brighter day,
 Traduce the splendour of a noontide ray,
 Prefer the twilight of a darker time,
 And deem his base stupidity no crime,
 The wretch that slights the bounty of the skies,
 And sinks while favour'd with the means to rise,
 Shall find them rated at their full amount,
 The good he scorn'd all carried to account.

Marshalling all his terrors as he came
 Thunder and earthquake and devouring flame,

From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law,
 Life for obedience, death for ev'ry flaunt
 When the great Sov'reign would his will express,
 He gives a perfect rule, what can he less?
 And guards it with a sanction as severe
 As vengeance can inflict, or sinners fear.
 Else his own glorious rights he would disclaim,
 And man might safely trifle with his name:
 He bids him glow with unremitting love
 To all on earth, and to himself above;
 Condemns the injurious deed, the sland'rous tongue,
 Tho' thought that meditates a brother's wrong
 Brings not alone, the more conspicuous part,
 His conduct to the test, but tries his heart

Hark! universal nature shook and groin'd,
 'Twas the last trumpet—see the Judge enthroned:
 Rouse all your courage at your utmost need,
 Now summon every virtue, stand and plead
 What, silent? Is your boasting heard no more?
 That self-renouncing wisdom, learn'd before,
 Had shed immortal glories on your brow,
 That all your virtues cannot purchase now

All joy to the believer! He can speak—
 Trembling, yet happy, confident yet meek

Since the dear hour that brought me to thy foot,
 And cut up all my follies by the root,
 I never trusted in an arm but thine,
 Nor hoped, but in Thy righteousness divine,
 My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
 Were but the feeble efforts of a child,
 Howe'er perform'd, it was their brightest part,
 That they proceeded from a grateful heart
 Cleansed in thine own all-purifying blood,
 Forgive their evil and accept their good,
 I cast them at thy feet—my only plea
 Is what it was, dependence upon thee,
 While struggling in the vale of tears below,
 That never fail'd, nor shall it fail me now

Angelic gratulations rend the skies,
 Pride falls unpitied, never more to rise,
 Humility is crown'd, and faith receives the prize.

EXPOSTULATION.

Tantano, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli
Dona sines? VIRGIL

WHY weeps the muse for England? What appears
In England's case to move the muse to tears?
From side to side of her delightful isle,
Is she not clothed with a perpetual smile?
Can nature add a charm or art confer
A new-found luxury not seen in her?
Where under heaven is pleasure more pursued,
Or where does cold reflection less intrude?
Her fields, a rich expanse of wavy corn,
Pour'd out from plenty's overflowing horn,
Ambrosial gardens, in which art supplies
The fervour and the force of Indian skies,
Her peaceful shores, where busy commerce waits
To pour his golden tide through all her gates,
Whom fiery suns that scorch the russet spice
Of eastern groves, and oceans floor'd with ice,
Forbid in vain to push his daring way
To darker climes, or climes of brighter day,
Whom the winds waft where'er the billows roll,
From the world's girdle to the frozen pole,
The chariots bounding in her wheel-worn streets,
Her vaults below, where every vintage meets.
Her theatres, her revels, and her sports,
The scenes to which not youth alone resorts,
But age in spite of weakness and of pain
Still haunts, in hope to dream of youth again
All speak her happy—let the muse look round
From East to West, no sorrow can be found,
Or only what, in cottages confined,
Sighs unregarded to the passing wind,
Then wherefore weep for England, what appears
In England's case to move the muse to tears?
The prophet wept¹ for Israel, wish'd his eyes
Were fountains fed with infinite supplies,

¹ "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears,"—
Jeremiah ix. 1.

For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong,
 There were the scorner's and the slanderer's tongue,
 Oaths used as playthings or convenient tools,
 As int'rest bias'd knaves, or fashion fools,
 Adult'ry neighing at his neighbour's door,
 Oppression labouring hard to grind the poor,
 The partial balance and deceitful weight,
 The treach'rous smile, a mask for secret hate,
 Hypocrisy, formality in pray'r,
 And the dull service of the lip were there.
 Her women, insolent and self caress'd,
 By vanity's unwearied finger dress'd,
 Forgot the blush that virgin fears impart
 To modest cheeks, and borrow'd one from art;
 Were just such trifles without worth or use,
 As silly pride and idleness produce,
 Curl'd, scented furbelow'd and flounced around,
 With feet too delicate to touch the ground,
 They stretch'd the neck, and roll'd the wanton eye,
 And sigh'd for ev'ry fool that flutter'd by.
 He saw his people slaves to ev'ry lust,
 Low, avaricious, arrogant, unjust,
 He heard the wheels of an avenging God
 Groan heavily along the distant road,
 Saw Babylon set wide her two leaved brass
 To let the military deluge pass,
 Jerusalem a prey, her glory soil'd,
 Her princes captive, and her treasures spoil'd;
 Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,
 Stamp'd with his foot and smote upon his thigh,
 But wept, and stamp'd, and smote his thigh in vain
 Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,
 And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit
 Ears long accusom'd to the pleasing lute,
 They scorn'd his inspiration and his theme,
 Pronounced him frantic and his fears a dream,
 With self indulgence wing'd the fleeting hours,
 Till the foe found them, and down fell the tow'rs
 Long time Assyria bound them in her chain,
 Till penitence had purged the public stain,
 And Cyrus, with relenting pity moved,
 Return'd them happy to the land they loved
 There, proof against prosperity, awhile
 They stood the test of her ensnaring smile,

And had the grace, in scenes of peace to show
 The virtue they had learn'd in scenes of woe
 But man is frail and can but ill sustain
 A long immunity from grief and pain,
 And after all the joys that plenty leads,
 With tiptoe step vice silently succeeds

When he that ruled them with a shepherd's rod,
 In form a man, in dignity a God,
 Came not expected in that humble guise,
 To sift, and search them with unerring eyes,
 He found conceal'd beneath a fair outside,
 The filth of rottenness and worm of pride,
 Their piety a system of deceit,
 Scripture employ'd to sanctify the cheat,
 The phariseo the dupe of his own art,
 Self-idolized, and yet a knave at heart

When nations are to perish in their sins,
 'Tis in the church the leprosy begins
 The priest, whose office is with zeal sincere
 To watch the fountain, and preserve it clear,
 Carelessly nods and sleeps upon the brink,
 While others poison what the flock must drink,
 Or, waking at the call of lust alone,
 Infuses lies and errors of his own
 His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure,
 And tainted by the very means of cure,
 Catch from each other a contagious spot,
 The foul forerunner of a general rot
 Then truth is hush'd that heresy may preach,
 And all is trash that reason cannot reach,
 Then God's own imago on the soul impress'd,
 Becomes a mock'ry and a standing jest,
 And faith, the root whence only can arise
 The graces of a life that wins the skies,
 Loses at once all value and esteem,
 Pronounced by graybeards a pernicious dream
 Then ceremony leads her bigots forth,
 Prepared to fight for shadows of no worth,
 While truths, on which eternal things depend,
 Find not, or hardly find a single friend
 As soldiers watch the signal of command,
 They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand,
 Happy to fill religion's vacant place
 With hollow form and gesture and grimace
 Such, when the Teacher of his church was there,
 People and priest, the sons of Israel were,

Stiff in the letter, lax in the design
 And import of their oracles divine,
 Their learning legendary, false, absurd,
 And yet exalted above God's own word,
 They drew a curse from an intended good,
 Puff'd up with gifts they never understood.
 He judg'd them with as terrible a frown,
 As if, not love, but wrath had brought him down.
 Yet he was gentle as soft summer airs,
 Had grace for others' sins, but none for theirs
 Through all he spoke a noble plainness ran,
 Rhet'ric is artifice, the work of man,
 And tricks and turns that fancy may devise,
 Are far too mean for him that rules the skies
 Th' astonish'd vulgar trembled while he tore
 The mask from faces never seen before,
 He stripp'd th' impostors in the noonday sun,
 Show'd that they follow'd all they seem'd to shun,
 Their pray'rs made public, their excesses kept
 As private as the chambers where they slept,
 The temple and its holy rites profaned
 By mumm'ries he that dwelt in it disdain'd.
 Uplifted hands, that at convenient times
 Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,
 Wash'd with a neatness scrupulously nice,
 And free from ev'ry taint but that of vice
 Judgment, however tardy, mends her pace
 When obstinacy once has conquer'd grace
 They saw distemper heal'd, and life restored
 In answer to the fiat of his word,
 Confess'd the wonder, and with daring tongue,
 Blasphemed th' authority from which it sprung
 They knew by sure prognostics seen on high,
 The future tone and temper of the sky,¹
 But grave dissemblers, could not understand
 That sin let loose speaks punishment at hand.
 Ask now of history's authentic page,
 And call up evidence from ev'ry age,
 Display, with busy and laborious hand,
 The blessings of the most indebted land,
 What nation will you find, whose annals prove
 So rich an int'rest in Almighty love?

¹ "He answered and said unto them, When it is evening ye say, It will be fair weather for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"—Matt. xvi. 2, 3

Where dwell they now, where dwelt in ancient day
 A people planted, water'd, blest as they ?
 Let Egypt's plagues, and Canaan's woes proclaim
 The favours pour'd upon the Jewish name,
 Their freedom purchased for them, at the cost
 Of all their hard oppressors valued most,
 Their title to a country not their own,
 Made sure by prodigies till then unknown,
 For them, the state they left made waste and void,
 For them, the states to which they went, destroy'd
 A cloud to measure out their march by day,
 By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way,
 That moving signal summoning, when best,
 Their host to move, and when it stay'd, to rest
 For them the rocks dissolved into a flood,
 The dews condensed into angehe food ,
 Their very garments saered, old yet new,
 And time forbid to touch them as he flew ,
 Streams swell'd above the bank, enjoin'd to stand,
 While they pass'd through to their appointed land ,
 Their leader arm'd with meekness, zeal, and love,
 And graced with clear credentials from above,
 Themselves secured beneath th' Almighty wing,
 Their God their captain,¹ lawgiver, and king
 Crown'd with a thousand victories, and at last
 Lords of the conquer'd soil, there rooted fast,
 In peace possessing what they won by war,
 Their name far publish'd and revered as far,
 Where will you find a race like theirs, endow'd
 With all that man e'er wish'd, or Heav'n bestow'd ?

They, and they only amongst all mankind,
 Received the transcript of th' Eternal Mind,
 Were trusted with his own engraven laws,
 And constituted guardians of his cause ,
 Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,
 And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.
 In vain the nations, that had seen them rise
 With fierce and envious yet admiring eyes,
 Had sought to crush them, guarded as they were
 By power divine, and skill that could not err,
 Had they maintain'd allegiance firm and sure,
 And kept the faith immaculate and pure,
 Then the proud eagles of all-conqu'ring Rome
 Had found one city not to be o'ercome,

And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd
 Had bid defiance to the warring world
 But grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,
 As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds,
 Cured of the golden calves their fathers' sin,
 They set up self, that idol god within,
 View'd a Delv'rer with disdain and hate,
 Who left them still a tributary state,
 Seized fast his hand, held out to set them free
 From a worse yoke, and nail'd it to the tree
 There was the consummation and the crown,
 The flow'r of Israel's infamy full blown,
 Thence date their sad declension and their fall,
 Their woes, not yet repeal'd, thence date them all.

Thus fell the best instructed in her day,
 And the most favour'd land, look where we may
 Philosophy indeed on Grecian eyes
 Had pour'd the day, and clear'd the Roman skies,
 In other climes perhaps creative art,
 With pow'r surpassing theirs perform'd her part,
 Might give more life to marble, or might fill
 The glowing tablets with a juster skill,
 Might shine in fable, and grace idle themes
 With all th' embroid'ry of poetic dreams,
 'Twas theirs alone to dive into the plan
 That truth and mercy had reveal'd to man,
 And while the world beside, that plan unknown,
 Deified useless wood, or senseless stone,
 They breathed in faith their well directed pray'rs,
 And the true God, the God of truth was theirs
 Their glory faded, and their race dispersed,
 The last of nations now, though once the first,
 They warn and teach the proudest, would they learn—
 Keep wisdom, or meet vengeance in your turn
 If we escaped not, if Heav'n spared not us,
 Peel'd,¹ scatter'd, and exterminated thus,
 If vice received her retribution due
 When we were visit'd, what hope for you?
 When God arises with an awful frown,
 To punish lust, or pluck presumption down,
 When gifts pervers'd, or not duly prized,
 Pleasure o'ervalued, and his grace despised.

¹ Burke (on a Regicide Peace) gives a good explanation of the word—
 "Whether its territory had a little more or a little less peeled from its surface."

Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand
 To pour down wrath upon a thankless land,
 He will be found impartially severe,
 Too just to wink, or speak the guilty clear
 O Israel, of all nations most undone!
 Thy diadem displaced, thy sceptre gone,
 Thy temple, once thy glory, fallen and rased,
 And thou a worshipper e'en where thou mayst,
 Thy services, once holy without spot
 Mere shadows now, their ancient pomp forgot,
 Thy Levites, once a consecrated host,
 No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,
 And thou thyself o'er ev'ry country sown,
 With none on earth that thou canst call thine
 own,

Cry aloud thou that sittest in the dust,
 Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjust,
 Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears,
 Say wrath is coming and the storm appears,
 But raise the shrillest cry in British ears

What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,
 And sling their foam against thy chalky shore?
 Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,
 And trident bearing queen of the wide seas—
 Why, having kept good faith and often shown
 Friendship and truth to others, find'st thou none?
 Thou that hast set the persecuted free,
 None interposes now to succour thee,
 Countries indebted to thy pow'r, that shine
 With light derived from thee, would smother thine;
 Thy very children watch for thy disgrace,
 A lawless brood, and curse thee to thy face
 Thy rulers load thy credit year by year
 With sums Peruvian mines could never clear,
 As if like arches built with skilful hand,
 The more 'twere press'd the firmer it would stand
 The cry in all thy ships is still the same,
 Speed us away to battle and to fame
 Thy mariners explore the wild expanse,
 Impatient to descry the flags of France,
 But, though they fight as thine have ever fought,
 Return ashamed without the wreaths they sought.
 Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,
 Chaos of contrarieties at war,
 Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,
 Discordant atoms meet, ferment, and fight,

Where obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,
 To disconcert what policy has plann'd;
 Where policy is busied all night long
 In setting right what faction has set wrong;
 Where sails of oratory thresh the floor,
 That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more.
 Thy rack'd inhabitants repine, complain,
 Tax'd till the brow of labour sweats in vain,
 War lays a burden on the reeling state,
 And peace does nothing to relieve the weight,
 Successive loads succeeding broils impose,
 And sighing millions prophesy the close

Is adverse Providence, when ponder'd well,
 So dimly writ, or difficult to spell,
 Thou canst not read with readiness and ease,
 Providence adverse in events like these?
 Know then, that heav'nly wisdom on this ball
 Creates, gives birth to, guides, consummates all.
 That while laborious and quick thoughted man
 Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan,
 He first conceives, then perfects his design,
 As a mere instrument in hands divine
 Blind to the working of that secret power
 That balances the wings of ev'ry hour,
 The busy trifler dreams himself alone,
 Frames many a purpose, and God works his own.
 States thrive or wither, as moons wax and wane,
 Even as his will and his decrees ordain,
 While honour, virtue, piety bear sway,
 They flourish, and as these decline, decay
 In just resentment of his injured laws,
 He pours contempt on them and on their cause,
 Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart
 The web of every scheme they have at heart,
 Bids rottenness invade and bring to dust
 The pillars of support in which they trust,
 And do his errand of disgrace and shame
 On the chief strength and glory of the frame
 None ever yet impeded what he wrought,
 None bars him out from his most secret thought,
 Darkness itself before his eye is light,
 And Hell's close mischief naked in his sight

Stand now and judge thyself—hast thou incur'd
 His anger who can waste thee with a word,
 Who poises and proportions sea and land,
 Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,

And in whose awful sight all nations seem
 As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream?
 Hast thou (a sacrilege his soul abhors)
 Claim'd all the glory of thy prosp'rous wars,
 Proud of thy fleets and armies, stolen the gem
 Of his just praise to lavish it on them?
 Hast thou not learn'd, what thou art often told,
 A truth still sacred, and believed of old,
 That no success attends on spears and swords
 Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's?
 That courage is his creature, and dismay
 The post that at his bidding speeds away,
 Ghastly in feature, and his stamm'ring tongue,
 With doleful rumour and sad presage hung,
 To quell the valour of the stoutest heart,
 And teach the combatant a woman's part?
 That he bids thousands fly when none pursue,
 Saves as he will by many, or by few,
 And claims for ever as his royal right
 Th' event and sure decision of the fight

Hast thou, though suckled at fair freedom's breast,
 Exported slavery to the conquer'd East,
 Pull'd down the tyrants India served with dread,
 And raised thyself, a greater, in their stead,
 Gone thither arm'd and hungry, return'd full,
 Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,
 A despot big with pow'r obtain'd by wealth,
 And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth?
 With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,
 But left their virtues and thine own behind,
 And, having *truck'd*¹ thy soul, brought home the fee,
 To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?

Hast thou by statute shoved from its design
 The Saviour's feast, his own blest bread and wine,
 And made the symbols of atoning grace
 An office key, a picklock to a place,
 That infidels may prove their title good
 By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood?
 A blot that will be still a blot, in spite
 Of all that grave apologists may write,
 And though a bishop toil to cleanse the stain,
 He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain

¹ *Bartered*—see Churchill in the "Duellist" —

"Lived with men infamous and vile,
Truck'd his salvation for a smile."

And hast thou sworn on every slight pretence,
 'Till perjuries are common as bad pence,
 While thousands, careless of the damning sin
 Kiss the book's outside who ne'er look within?

Hast thou, when Heav'n has clothed thee with di-
 grace,

And long provoked, repaid thee to thy face,
 (For thou hast known eclipses, and endured
 Dimness and anguish, all thy beams obscured,
 When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow,
 And never of a sabler hue than now.)
 Hast thou, with heart perverse and conscience scar'd,
 Despising all rebuke, still persevered,
 And, having chosen evil, scorn'd the voice
 That cried repent—and gloried in thy choice?
 Thy fastings, when calamity at last
 Suggests th' expedient of a yearly fast
 What mean they? Canst thou dream there is a pow'r
 In lighter diet, at a later hour,
 To charm to sleep the threat'nings of the skies,
 And lude past folly from all seeming eyes?
 The fast that wins deliv'rance, and suspends
 The stroke that a vindictive God intends,
 Is to renounce hypocrisy, to draw
 Thy life upon the pattern of the law,
 To war with pleasures idolized before,
 To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more
 All fasting else, whate'er be the pretence,
 's wooing mercy by renew'd offence

Hast thou within thee sin, that in old time
 Brought fire from heav'n, the sex abusing crime,
 Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace
 Baboons are free from, upon human race?
 Think on the fruitful and well water'd spot
 That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,
 Where paradise seem'd still vouchsafed on earth,¹
 Burning and scorched into perpetual dearth,
 Or, in his words who damn'd the base desire,
 Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire
 Then nature, injured, scandalized, defiled,
 Unveil'd her blushing cheek, look'd on, and smiled.
 Beheld with joy the lovely scene defaced,
 And praised the wrath that laid her beauties waste

¹ "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, even as the garden of the Lord."—Genesis xiii.

Far be the thought from any verse of mine,
 And further still the form'd and fix'd design,
 To thrust the charge of deeds that I detest,
 Against an innocent unconscious breast
 The man, that dares traduce because he can
 With safety to himself, is not a man
 An individual is a sacred mark,
 Not to be pierced in play, or in the dark,
 But public censure speaks a public foe,
 Unless a zeal for virtue guide the blow

The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,
 From mean self-int'rest and ambition clear,
 Their hope in heav'n, servility their scorn,
 Prompt to persuade, expostulate, and warn,
 Their wisdom pure, and giv'n them from above,
 Their usefulness insured by zeal and love,
 As meek as the man Moses, and withal
 As bold as, in Agrippa's presence, Paul,
 Should fly the world's contaminating touch,
 Holy and unpolluted—are there such?
 Except a few with Eli's spirit blest
 Hophni and Phineas may describe the rest¹

Where shall a teacher look in days like these,
 For ears and hearts that he can hope to please?
 Look to the poor—the simple and the plain
 Will hear perhaps thy salutary strain,
 Humility is gentle, apt to learn,
 Speak but the word, will listen and return
 Alas, not so! the poorest of the flock
 Are proud, and set their faces as a rock,
 Denied that earthly opulence they choose,
 God's better gift they scoff at and refuse
 The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,
 Are more intelligent at least, try them
 Oh vain inquiry! They, without remorse,
 Are altogether gone a devious course,
 Where beck'ning pleasure leads them, wildly stray,
 Have burst the bands and cast the yoke away

Now borne upon the wings of truth sublime,
 Review thy dim original and prime,
 This island spot of unreclaim'd rude earth,
 The cradle that received thee at thy birth,
 Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,
 And Danish howlings scared thee as they pass'd;

¹ See 1 Samuel ii. iii.

For thou wast born amid the din of arms,
 And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms
 While yet thou wast a grov'ling puling chit,
 Thy bones not fashion'd, and thy joints not knit,
 The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,
 Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now:
 His victory was that of orient light,
 When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night
 Thy language at this distant moment shows
 How much the country to the conqu'ror owes,
 Expressive, energetic, and refined,
 It sparkles with the gems he left behind
 He brought thy land a blessing when he came,
 He found thee savage, and he left thee tame,
 Taught thee to clothe thy pink'd and painted hide,
 And grace thy figure with a soldier's pride,
 He sow'd the seeds of order where he went,
 Improved thee far beyond his own intent,
 And while he ruled thee by the sword alone,
 Made thee at last a warrior like his own
 Religion, if in heav'nly truths attired,
 Needs only to be seen to be admired,
 But thine, as dark as witch'ries of the night,
 Was form'd to harden hearts and shock the sight
 Thy Druids struck the well strung harps they bore
 With fingers deeply dyed in human gore,
 And, while the victim slowly bled to death,
 Upon the tolling chords rung out his dying breath
 Who brought the lamp that with awak'ning beams
 Dispell'd thy gloom, and broke away thy dreams,
 Tradition, now decrepit and worn out,
 Babblers of ancient fables, leaves a doubt,
 But still light reach'd thee, and those gods of thine
 Woden and Thor, each tott'ring in his shrine,
 Fell broken and defaced at his own door,
 As Dagon in Philistia long before¹
 But Rome with sorceries and magic wand,
 Soon raised a cloud that darken'd ev'ry land,
 And thine was smother'd in the stench and fog
 Of Tiber's marshes, and the Papal bog,
 Then priests with bulls, and briefs, and shaven crowns,
 And griping fists and unrelenting frowns,

¹ "And when they arose early on the morrow morning behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground, before the ark of the Lord: and the head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands, were cut off upon the threshold, only the stump of Dagon was left to him."—1 Samuel v. 4.

In¹ates and delegates with pow'rs from hell,
 Though heav'nly in pretension, fleeced thee well,
 And to this hour, to keep it fresh in mind,
 Some twigs of that old scourge are left behind ¹
 Thy soldiery, the Pope's well-managed pack,
 Were train'd beneath his lash and knew the smack,
 And when he laid them on the scent of blood,
 Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood ²
 Lavish of life to win an empty tomb,
 That proved a mint of wealth, a mine to Rome,
 They left their bones beneath unfriendly skies,
 His worthless absolution all the prize
 Thou wast the veriest slave in days of yore,
 That ever dragg'd a chain, or tugg'd an oar,
 Thy monarchs arbitrary, fierce, unjust,
 Themselves the slaves of bigotry, or lust,
 Disdain'd thy counsels, only in distress
 Found thee a goodly sponge for pow'r to press
 Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,
 Provoked and harass'd, in return plagued thee,
 Call'd thee away from peaceable employ,
 Domestic happiness and rural joy,
 To waste thy life in arms, or lay it down
 In causeless feuds and bick'ings of their own.
 Thy Parliaments adored on bended knees
 The sovereignty they were convened to please,
 Whate'er was ask'd, too timid to resist,
 Complied with, and were graciously dismiss'd
 And if some Spartan soul a doubt express'd,
 And, blushing at the tameness of the rest,
 Dared to suppose the subject had a choice,
 He was a traitor by the gen'ral voice
 Oh slave! with pow'rs thou didst not dare exert,
 Verse cannot stoop so low as thy desert,
 It shakes the sides of splenetic disdain,
 Thou self-entitled ruler of the main,
 To trace thee to the date when yon fair sea,
 That clips thy shores, had no such charms for thee,
 When other nations flew from coast to coast,
 And thou hadst neither fleet nor flag to boast
 Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust,
 Blush if thou canst, not petrified, thou must
 Act but an honest and a faithful part,
 Compare what then thou wast, with what thou art,

¹ Which may be found at Doctors' Commons.—C.

² The Crusades

And God's disposing providence confess'd,
 Obduracy itself must yield the rest—
 Then thou art bound to serve him, and to prove
 Hour after hour thy gratitude and love
 Has he not hid thee and thy favour'd land
 For ages safe beneath his shelt'ring hand,
 Giv'n thee his blessing on the clearest proof,
 Bid nations leagued against thee stand aloof,
 And charged hostility and hate to roar
 Where else they would, but not upon thy shore?
 His pow'r secured thee when presumptuous Spain
 Baptized her fleet invincible in vain,
 Her gloomy monarch, doubtful, and resign'd
 To ev'ry pang that racks an anxious mind,
 Ask'd of the waves that broke upon his coast,
 What tidings? and the surge replied—all lost!
 And when the Stuart, leaning on the Scot,
 Then too much fear'd and now too much forgot,
 Pierced to the very centre of thy realm,
 And hoped to seize his abdiented helm,
 'Twas but to prove how quickly with a frown,
 He that had raised thee could have pluck'd thee down
 Peculiar is the grace by thee possess'd,
 Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest,
 Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,
 And all at home is pleasure, wealth, and ease
 'Tis thus, extending his tempestuous arm,
 Thy Maker fills the nations with alarm,
 While his own Heav'n surveys the troubled scene,
 And feels no change, unshaken and serene
 Freedom, in other lands scarce known to shine,
 Pours out a flood of splendour upon thine,
 Thou hast as bright an int'rest in her rays,
 As ever Roman had in Rome's best days
 True freedom is, where no restraint is known
 That scripture, justice, and good sense disown
 Where only vice and injury are tied,
 And all from shore to shore is free beside—
 Such freedom is—and Windsor's hoary tow'r
 Stood trembling at the boldness of thy pow'r
 That won a nymph on that immortal plain,
 Like her the fabled Phœbus woo'd in vain,
 He found the laurel only—happier you
 Th' unfading laurel and the virgin too!

¹ Alluding to the grant of Magna Charta, which was extorted from King John by the Barons at Runnymede, near Windsor.—C

Now think, if pleasure have a thought to spare,
 If God himself be not beneath her care,
 If bus'ness, constant as the wheels of time,
 Can pause one hour to read a serious rhyme,
 If the new mail thy merchants now receive,
 Or expectation of the next give leave,—
 Oh think, if chargeable with deep arrears
 For such indulgence gilding all thy years,
 How much though long neglected, shining yet,
 The beams of heav'nly truth have swell'd the debt.
 When persecuting zeal made royal sport
 With tortured innocence in Mary's court,
 And Bonner, blithe as shepherd at a wake,
 Enjoy'd the show, and danced about the stake,
 The sacred Book its value understood,
 Received the seal of martyrdom in blood
 Those holy men, so full of truth and grace,
 Seem to reflection of a different race,
 Meek, modest, venerable, wise, sincere,
 In such a cause they could not dare to fear,
 They could not purchase earth with such a prize,
 Nor spare a life too short to reach the skies
 From them to thee convey'd along the tide,
 Their streaming hearts pour'd freely when they died.
 Those truths which neither use nor years impair,
 Invite thee, woo thee, to the bliss they share
 What dotage will not vanity maintain,
 What web too weak to catch a modern brain?
 The moles and bats in full assembly find
 On special search, the keen-eyed eagle blind
 And did they dream, and art thou wiser now?
 Prove it—if better, I submit and bow
 Wisdom and goodness are twin-born, one heart
 Must hold both sisters, never seen apart.

So then—as darkness overspread the deep,
 Ere nature rose from her eternal sleep,
 And thus delightful earth and that fair sky
 Leap'd out of nothing, call'd by the Most High,
 By such a change thy darkness is made light,
 Thy chaos order, and thy weakness might,
 And he whose power mere nullity obeys.
 Who found thee nothing, form'd thee for his praise
 To praise him is to serve him, and fulfil,
 Doing and suffering his unquestion'd will,
 'Tis to believe what men inspired of old
 Faithful and faithfully inform'd, unfold;

Candid and just, with no false aim in view,
 To take for truth what cannot but be true,
 To learn in God's own school the Christian part,
 And bind the task assign'd thee to thine heart
 Happy the man there seeking and there found,
 Happy the nation where such men abound.

How shall a verse impress thee? By what name
 Shall I adjure thee not to court thy shame?
 By theirs, whose bright example unimpeach'd
 Directs thee to that eminence they reach'd,
 Heroes and worthies of days past, thy sires?
 Or his, who touch'd their hearts with hallow'd fires?
 Their names, alas! in vain reproach an age
 Whom all the vanities they scorn'd, engage,
 And his that seraphs tremble at, is hung
 Disgracefully on ev'ry trisler's tongue,
 Or serves the champion in forensic war,
 To flourish and parade with at the bar
 Pleasure herself perhaps suggests a plea,
 If int'rest move thee, to persuade ev'n thee
 By ev'ry charm that smiles upon her face,
 By joys possess'd, and joys still held in chase,
 If dear society be worth a thought,
 And if the feast of freedom eloy thee not,
 Reflect that these, and all that seems thine own,
 Held by the tenure of his will alone,
 Like angels in the service of their Lord,
 Remain with thee, or leave thee at his word,
 That gratitude and temperance in our use
 Of what he gives, unsparing and profuse,
 Secure the favour and enhance the joy,
 That thankless waste and wild abuse destroy

But above all reflect, how cheap soe'er
 Those rights that millions envy thee appear,
 And though resolved to risk them, and swim down
 The tide of pleasure, heedless of his frown
 That blessings truly sacred, and when giv'n
 Mark'd with the signature and stamp of Heav'n,
 The word of prophecy, those truths divine
 Which make that Heav'n, if thou desire it, thine;
 'Awful alternative! believed, beloved,
 Thy glory, and thy shame if unimproved,)
 Are never long vouchsafed, if push'd aside
 With cold disgust, or philosophic pride,
 And that judicially withdrawn, disgrace,
 F. and darkness occupy their place

A world is up in arms, and thou, a spot
 Not quickly found if negligently sought,
 Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,
 Endur'st the brunt, and dar'st defy them all
 And wilt thou join to this bold enterprise
 A bolder still, a contest with the skies?
 Remember, if he guard thee and secure,
 Whoe'er assails thee, thy success is sure,
 But if he leave thee, though the skill and pow'r
 Of nations sworn to spoil thee and devour,
 Were all collected in thy single arm,
 And thou couldst laugh away the fear of harm,
 That strength would fail, opposed against the push
 And feeble onset of a pigmy rush

Say not (and if the thought of such defence
 Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence)
 What nation amongst all my foes is free
 From crimes as base as any charged on me?
 Their measure fill'd—they too shall pay the debt
 Which God, though long forborne, will not forget.
 But know, that wrath divine, when most severe,
 Makes justice still the guide of his career,
 And will not punish in one mingled crowd,
 Them without light, and thee without a cloud.
 Muse, hang thus harp upon yon aged beech,
 Still murmur with the solemn truths I teach,
 And while, at intervals, a cold blast sings
 Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,
 My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament
 A nation scourged, yet tardy to repent
 I know the warning song is sung in vain,
 That few will hear, and fewer heed the strain
 But if a sweeter voice, and one design'd
 A blessing to my country and mankind,
 Reclaim the wand'ring thousands, and bring home
 A flock so scatter'd and so wont to roam,
 Then place it once again between my knees,
 The sound of truth will then be sure to please,
 And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,
 In scenes of plenty, or the pining waste,
 Shall be my chieftest theme, my glory to the last

HOPE.

—— deccas iter, et sacra ostia pandas — VIRGIL, *Ec. vi*

ASK what is human life—the sage replies,
 With disappointment low'ring in his eyes,
 A painful passage o'er a restless flood,
 A vain pursuit of fugitive false good,
 A scene of fancied bliss and heartfelt care,
 Closing at last in darkness and despair —
 The poor, inured to drudgery and distress,
 Act without aim, think little, and feel less,
 And nowhere, but in feign'd Arcadian scenes,
 Taste happiness, or know what pleasure means
 Riches are pass'd away from hand to hand,
 As fortune, vice, or folly may command;
 As in a dance the pair that take the lead
 Turn downward, and the lowest pair succeed,
 So shifting and so various is the plan,
 By which Heav'n rules the mix'd affairs of man,
 Vicissitude wheels round the motley crowd,
 The rich grow poor, the poor become purse-proud;
 Business is labour, and man's weakness such,
 Pleasure is labour too, and tires as much,
 The very sense of it foregoes its use,
 By repetition pall'd, by age obtuse
 Youth lost in dissipation, we deplore
 Through life's sad remnant, what no sighs restore;
 Our years, a fruitless race without a prize,
 Too many, yet too few to make us wise
 Dangling his cane¹ about, and taking snuff,
 Lothario cries, what philosophic stuff!
 Oh querulous and weak! whose useless brain
 Once thought of nothing, and now thinks in vain,
 Whose eye reverted weeps o'er all the past,
 Whose prospect shows thee a disheart'ning waste,
 Would age in thee resign his wintry reign
 And youth invigorate that frame again,
 Renew'd desire would grace with other speech
 Joys always prized, when placed within our reach.
 For lift thy palsied head, shake off the gloom
 That overhangs the borders of thy tomb,

¹ How much happier is Pope—

"And the nice conduct of a clouded cane."

See nature gay as when she first began,
 With smiles alluring her admirer, man,
 She spreads the morning over eastern hills,
 Earth glitters with the drops the night distils,
 The sun obedient at her call appears
 To fling his glories o'er the robe she wears,
 Banks clothed with flow'rs, groves fill'd with sprightly
 sounds,

The yellow tilth,¹ green meads, rocks, rising grounds,
 Streams edged with osiers, salt'ning ev'ry field
 Where'er they flow, now seen, and now conceal'd,
 From the blue rim where skies and mountains meet,
 Down to the very turf beneath thy feet,
 Ten thousand charms that only fools despise,
 Or pride can look at with indif'rent eyes,
 All speak one language, all with one sweet voice
 Cry to her universal realm, Rejoice
 Man feels the spur of passions and desires,
 And she gives largely more than he requires,
 Not that his hours devoted all to care,
 Hollow-eyed abstinence and lean despair,
 The wretch may pine, while to his smell, taste, sight,
 She holds a paradise of rich delight,
 But gently to rebuke his awkward fear,
 To prove that what she gives, she gives sincere,
 To banish hesitation, and proclaim
 His happiness, her dear, her only aim
 'Tis grave philosophy's absurdest dream,
 That Heav'n's intentions are not what they seem,
 That only shadows are dispensed below,
 And earth has no reality but woe

Thus things terrestrial wear a diff'rent hue,
 As youth, or age persuades, and neither true,
 So Flora's wreath through colour'd crystal seen,
 The rose, or lily, appears blue or green,
 But still th' imputed tints are those alone
 The medium represents, and not their own

To rise at noon, sit slipshod and undress'd,
 To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,
 'Till half the world comes rattling at his door,
 To fill the dull vacancy till four,
 And just when evening turns the blue vault gray,
 To spend two hours in dressing for the day,
 To make the sun a bauble without use,
 Save for the fruits his heav'nly beams produce,

¹ TILTH is any kind of country work which "tillth," or turns up the earth.

Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,
 Who bids him shine, or if he shine or not,
 Through mere necessity to close his eyes
 Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise,
 Is such a life, so tediously the same,
 So void of all utility or aim,
 That poor JONQUIL, with almost ev'ry breath
 Sighs for his exit, vulgarly call'd death
 For he, with all his follies, has a mind
 Not yet so blank, or fashionably blind,
 But now and then perhaps a feeble ray
 Of distant wisdom shoots across his way,
 By which he reads that life, without a plan,
 As useless as the moment it began,
 Serves merely as a soil for discontent
 To thrive in, an incumbrance, e'er half spent
 Oh weariness beyond what asses feel,
 That tread the circuit of the cistern wheel,
 A dull rotation never at a stay,
 Yesterday's face twin image of to-day,
 While conversation, an exhausted stock,
 Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.
 No need, he cries, of gravity stuff'd out
 With academic dignity devout,
 To read wise lectures, vanity the text,
 Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next,
 For truth self-evident with pomp impress'd,
 Is vanity surpassing all the rest

That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,
 Yet seldom sought, where only to be found.
 While passion turns aside from its due scope
 Th' inquirer's aim, that remedy, is Hope
 Life is his gift, from whom whate'er life needs,
 And ev'ry good and perfect gift proceeds,
 Bestow'd on man, like all that we partake,
 Royally, freely, for his bounty sake
 'Transient indeed, as is the fleeting hour,
 And yet the seed of an immortal flow'r,
 Design'd in honour of his endless love,
 To fill with fragrance his abode above
 No trifle, howsoever short it seem,
 And howsoever shadowy, no dream,
 its value, what no thought can ascertain,
 Nor all an angel's eloquence explain
 Men deal with life, as children with their play,
 Who first misuse, then cast their toys away,

Live to no s^uber-purpose, and contend
 That their Creator has no serious end
 When God and man stand opposite in view.
 Man's disappointment must of course ensue
 The just Creator condescends to write,
 In beams of inextinguishable light,
 His names of wisdom, goodness, pow'r, and love,
 On all that blooms below, or shines above,
 To catch the wand'ring notice of mankind,
 And teach the world, if not perversely blind,
 His gracious attributes, and prove the share
 His offspring hold in his paternal care
 If led from earthly things to things divine,
 His creature thwart not his august design,
 Then praise is heard instead of reas'ning pride,
 And captious c^uvil and complaint subside
 Nature employ'd in her allotted place,
 Is handmaid to the purposes of grace,
 By good vouchsafed makes known superior good,
 And bliss not seen by blessings understood
 That bliss, reveal'd in Scripture with a glow
 Bright as the covenant-insuring bow,
 Fires all his feelings with a noble scorn
 Of sensual evil, and thus Hope is born

Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all
 That men have deem'd substantial since the fall,
 Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe
 From emptiness itself a real use,
 And while she takes, as at a father's hand,
 What health and sober appetite demand,
 From fading good derives with chymic art
 That lasting happiness, a thankful heart
 Hope, with uplifted foot set free from earth,
 Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,
 On steady wing sails through th' immense abyss,
 Plucks amaranthine joys from bow'rs of bliss,
 And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
 With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.
 Hope, as an anchor firm and sure, holds fast
 The Christian vessel, and defies the blast,
 Hope! nothing else can nourish and secure
 His new-born virtues, and preserve him pure,
 Hope! let the wretch once conscious of the joy,
 Whom now despairing agonies destroy,
 Speak, for he can, and none so well as he,
 What treasures centre, what delights in thee

Had he the gems, the spices, and the land
That boasts the treasure, all at his command,
The fragrant grove, th' inestimable mine,
Were light when weigh'd against one smile of thine

Though clasp'd and cradled in his nurse's arms,

He shone with all a cherub's artless charms,
Man is the genuine offspring of revolt,
Stubborn and sturdy, a wild ass's colt,
His passions, like the wat'ry stores that sleep
Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,
Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm,
To frown and roar, and shake his feeble form
From infancy through childhood's giddy maze,
Forward at school, and fretful in his plays,
The puny tyrant burns to subjugate
The free republic of the whip-gig state
If one, his equal in athletic frame,

Or, more provoking still, of nobler name,
Dares step across his arbitrary views,
An *Iliad*, only not in verse, ensues
The little Greeks look trembling at the scales,
Till the best tongue, or heaviest hand, prevails

Now see him launch'd into the world at large,
If priest, supinely droning o'er his charge,
Their fleece his pillow, and his weekly drawl,
Though short, too long, the price he pays for all;
If lawyer, loud, whatever cause he plead,
But proudest of the worst, if that succeed.
Perhaps a grave physician, gath'ring fees,
Punctually paid for length'ning out disease,
No Cotton,¹ whose humanity sheds rays
That make superior skill his second praise
If arms engage him, he devotes to sport
His date of life, so likely to be short,
A soldier may be anything, if brave,
So may a tradesman, if not quite a knave
Such stuff the world is made of, and mankind
To passion, int'rest, pleasure, whom resign'd,
Insist on, as if each were his own Pope,
Forgiveness, and the privilege of hope,
But conscience, in some awful silent hour,
When captivating lusts have lost their power,
Perhaps when sickness, or some fearful dream
Reminds him of religion, hated theme!

¹ This admirable person died at St Alban's in 1768. His "Fireside" is still read; but Cowper has given to him a brighter memory

Starts from the down on which she lately slept,
And tells of laws despised, at least not kept,
Shows with a pointing finger, and no noise,
A pale procession of past sinful joys,
All witnesses of blessings foully scorn'd,
And life abused—and not to be suborn'd
Mark these, she says, these summon'd from afar,
Begin their march to meet thee at the bar
There find a judge, inexorably just,
And perish there, as all presumption must

Peace be to those (such peace as earth can give)
Who live in pleasure, dead ev'n while they live,
Born capable indeed of heav'nly truth,
But down to latest age from earliest youth,
Their mind a wilderness, through want of care,
The plough of wisdom never ent'ring there
Peace (if insensibility may claim
A right to the meek honours of her name)
To men of pedigree, their noble race
Emulous always of the nearest place
To any throne, except the throne of grace
Let cottagers and unenlighten'd swains
Revere the laws they dream that Heav'n ordains,
Resort on Sundays to the house of pray'r,
And ask, and fancy they find blessings there,
Themselves perhaps, when weary they retreat
T'enjoy cool nature in a country seat,
T'exchange the centre of a thousand trades,
For clumps and lawns and temples and cascades,
May now and then their velvet cushions take,
And seem to pray for good example sake,
Judging, in charity no doubt, the town
Pious enough, and having need of none
Kind souls¹ to teach them tenantry to prize
What they themselves without remorse despise,
Nor hope have they nor fear of aught to come,
As well for them had prophecy been dumb,
They could have held the conduct they pursue,
Had Paul of Tarsus lived and died a Jew,
And truth proposed to cens'ners wise as they,
Is a pearl cast—completely cast away

They die—Death lends them, pleased and as in
sport,
All the grim honours of his ghastly court,
Far other paintings grace the chamber now,
Where late we saw the mimic landscape glow,

The busy heralds hang the sable scene
 With mournful 'scutcheons and dim lamps between,
 Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,
 But they, that wore them, move not at the sound;
 The coronet placed idly at their head,
 Adds nothing now to the degraded dead
 And ev'n the star that glitters on the bier,
 Can only say, Nobility lies here
 Peace to all such—'twere pity to offend
 By useless censure whom we cannot mend,
 Life without hope can close but in despair,
 'Twas there we found them and must leave them there

As when two pilgrims in a forest stray,
 Both may be lost, yet each in his own way,
 So fares it with the multitudes beguiled
 In vain opinion's waste and dangerous wild,
 Ten thousand rove the brakes and thorns among,
 Some eastward, and some westward, and all wrong:
 But here, alas! the fatal difference lies,
 Each man's belief is right in his own eyes,
 And he, that blames what they have blindly chose,
 Incurs resentment for the love he shows

Say, botanist! within whose province fall
 The cedar and the hyssop on the wall,
 Of all that deck the lanes, the fields, the bow'rs,
 What parts the kindred tribes of weeds and flowers?
 Sweet scent, or lovely form, or both combin'd,
 Distinguish ev'ry cultivated kind,
 The want of both denotes a meaner breed,
 And Chloe from her garland picks the weed.
 Thus hopes of every sort, whatever sect
 Esteem them, sow them, rear them, and protect
 If wild in nature, and not duly found,
 Gethsemane! in thy dear, hallow'd ground,
 That cannot bear the blaze of Scripture light,
 Nor cheer the spirit, nor refresh the sight,
 Nor animate the soul to Christian deeds,—
 Oh cast them from thee! are weeds, arrant weeds.

Ethelred's house, the centre of six ways,
 Diverging each from each, like equal rays,
 Himself as bountiful as April rains,
 Lord paramount of the surrounding plains,
 Would give relief of bed and board to none,
 But guests that sought it in th' appointed Osn.
 And they might enter at his open door,
 Ev'n till his spacious hall would hold no more

He sent a servant forth by ev'ry road,
 To sound his horn, and publish it abroad,
 That all might mark, knight, menial, high and
 low,

An ord'nance it concern'd them much to know
 If after all, some headstrong, hardy lout
 Would disobey, though sure to be shut out,
 Could he with reason murmur at his ease,
 Himself sole author of his own disgrace?
 No! the decree was just and without flaw,
 And he that made, had right to make the law;
 His sov'reign power and pleasure unrestrain'd
 The wrong was his, who wrongfully complain'd.

Yet half mankind maintain a churlish strife
 With him, the donor of eternal life,
 Because the deed, by which his love confirms
 The largess he bestows, prescribes the terms
 Compliance with his will your lot insures,
 Accept it only, and the boon is yours,
 And sure it is as kind to smile and give,
 As with a frown to say, Do this and live
 Love is not pedler's trumpery, bought and sold,
 He *will* give freely, or he *will* withhold,
 His soul abhors a mercenary thought,
 And him as deeply who abhors it not,
 He stipulates indeed, but merely this,
 That man will freely take an unbought bliss,
 Will trust him for a faithful gen'rous part,
 Nor set a price upon a willing heart
 Of all the ways that seem to promise fair,
 To place you where his saints his presence share,
 This only can—for this plain cause, express'd
 In terms as plain, himself has shut the rest
 But oh, the strife, the bick'ring, and debate,
 The tidings of unpurchased heav'n create!
 The fluted fan, the bridle, and the toss,
 All speakers, yet all language at a loss
 From stucco'd walls smart arguments rebound,
 And beaux, adepts in ev'ry thing profound,
 Die of disdain, or whistle off the sound.
 Such is the clamour of rooks, daws, and kites,
 Th' explosion of the levell'd tube excites,
 Where mould'ring abbey-walls o'erhang the glade,
 And oaks coeval spread a mournful shade,
 The screaming nations hov'ring in mid air,
 Loudly resent the stranger's freedom there,

And seem to warn him never to repeat
 His bold intrusion on their dark retreat.
 Adieu, Vinoso cries, e'er yet he sips,
 The purple bumper trembling at his lips,
 Adieu to all morality ' if grace
 Make works a vain ingredient in the case
 The Christian hope is—waiter, draw the cork—
 If I mistake not—blockhead! with a fork!
 Without good works, whatever some may boast,
 Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast
 My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,
 That heav'n will weigh man's virtues and his crimes,
 With nice attention in a righteous scale,
 And save, or damn, as these, or those, prevail
 I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,
 And silence every fear with—God is just,
 But if perchance on some dull drizzling day,
 A thought intrude that says, or seems to say,
 If thus th' important cause is to be tried,
 Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side—
 I soon recover from these needless frights,
 And, God is merciful—sets all to rights
 Thus between justice, as my prime support,
 And mercy fled to, as the last resort,
 I glide and steal along with heav'n in view,
 And—pardon me, the bottle stands with you.
 I never will believe, the Col'nel cries,
 The sanguinary schemes that some devise,
 Who make the good Creator, on their plan,
 A being of less equity than man
 If appetite, or what divines call lust,
 Which men comply with, e'en because they must,
 Be punish'd with perdition, who is pure?
 Then theirs, no doubt, as well as mine, is sure
 If sentence of eternal pain belong
 To ev'ry sudden slip and transient wrong,
 Then heav'n enjoins the fallible and frail,
 An hopeless task, and damns them if they fail.
 My creed (whatever some creed makers mean
 By Athanasian nonsense, or Nicene)
 My creed is, he is safe that does his best,
 And death's a doom sufficient for the rest.
 Right, says an ensign, and for aught I see,
 Your faith and mine substantially agree
 The best of ev'ry man's performance here,
 Is to discharge the duties of his sphere

A lawyer's dealing should be just and fair,
 Honesty shines with great advantage there,
 Fasting and pray'r sit well upon a priest,
 A decent caution and reserve at least
 A soldier's best is courage in the field,
 With nothing here that wants to be conceal'd,
 Manly deportment, gallant, easy, gay,
 A hand as lib'ral as the light of day,
 The soldier thus endow'd who never shrinks,
 Nor closes up his thought whate'er he thinks,
 Who scorns to do an injury by stealth,
 Must go to heav'n—and I must drink his health.

Sir Smug ' he cries (for lowest at the board,
 Just made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,
 His shoulders witnessing by many a shrug,
 How much his feelings suffered, sat Sir Smug)
 Your office is to winnow false from true,
 Come, prophet, drink, and tell us what think you.

Sighing and smiling as he takes his glass,
 Which they that woo preferment rarely pass,
 Fallible man, the church-bred youth replies,
 Is still sound fallible, however wise,
 And differing judgments serve but to declare
 That truth lies somewhere, if we knew but where
 Of all it ever was my lot to read
 Of critics now alive, or long since dead,
 The book of all the world that charm'd me most
 Was,—well—a day, the title-page was lost
 The writer well remarks, a heart, that knows
 To take with gratitude what Heav'n bestows,
 With prudence always ready at our call,
 To guide our use of it, is all in all
 Doubtless it is—to which of my own store
 I superadd a few essentials more;
 But these, excuse the liberty I take,
 I wave just now, for conversation sake —
 Spoke like an oracle, they all exclaim,
 And add Right Rev'rend to Smug's honour'd name.

And yet our lot is giv'n us in a land
 Where busy arts are never at a stand,
 Where science points her telescopic eye,
 Familiar with the wonders of the sky,
 Where bold inquiry diving out of sight,
 Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light,
 Where nought eludes the persevering quest,
 That fashion, taste, or luxury suggest.

But above all, in her own light array'd,
See Mercy's grand apocalypse display'd!
The sacred Book no longer suffers wrong,
Bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue,
But speaks with plainness art could never mend,
What simplest minds can soonest comprehend
God gives the word, the preachers throng around,
Lave from his lips, and spread the glorious sound:
That sound bespeaks salvation on her way,
The trumpet of a life restoring day,
'Tis heard where England's eastern glory shines,
And in the gulphs of her Cornubian mines

And still it spreads See Germany send forth
Her sons to pour it on the farthest north
Fired with a zeal peculiar, they defy
The rage and rigour of a polar sky,
And plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose
On icy plains, and in eternal snows

Oh blest within th' inclosure of your rocks,
Nor herds have ye to boast, nor bleating flocks,
No fertilizing streams your fields divide,
That show reversed the villas on their side,
No groves have ye, no cheerful sound of bird,
Or voice of turtle in your land is heard,
Nor grateful eglantine regales the smell
Of those that walk at ev'ning where ye dwell—
But winter arm'd with terrors, here unknown,
Sits absolute on his unshaken throne,
Piles up his stores amidst the frozen waste,
And bids the mountains he has built, stand fast,
Beckons the legions of his storms away
From happier scenes, to make your land a prey,
Proclaims the soil a conquest he has won,
And scorns to share it with the distant sun.
—Yet truth is yours, remote, unenvied isle,
And peace, the genuine offspring of her smile;
The pride of letter'd ignorance that binds,
In chains of error, our accomplish'd minds,
That decks with all the splendour of the true
A false religion, is unknown to you
Nature indeed vouchsafes for our delight
The sweet vicissitudes of day and night,
Soft airs and genial moisture feed and cheer
Field, fruit, and flow'r, and ev'ry creature here,

¹ The Moravian missionaries in Greenland See Krantz.—(1)

But brighter beams than his who fires the skies,
Have ris'n at length on your admiring eyes,
That shoot into your darkest caves the day
From which our nicer opties turn away

Here see th' encouragement grace gives to vice,
The dire effect of mercy without price!
What were they?—what some fools are made by art
They were by nature, atheists, head and heart
The gross idolatry blind heathens teach
Was too refined for them, beyond their reach,
Not ev'n the glorious sun, though men revere
The monarch most that seldom will appear,
And though his beams, that quicken where they shine,
May claim some right to be esteem'd divine,
Not ev'n the sun, desirable as rare,
Could bend one knee, engage one vot'ry there,
They were what base credulity believes
True Christians are, dissemblers, drunkards, thieves
The full-gorged savage at his nanseons feast,
Spent half the darkness, and snored out the rest,
Was one, whom justice on an equal plan
Denouncing death upon the sins of man,
Might almost have indulged with an escape,
Chargeable only with a human shape

What are they now?—morality may spare
Her grave concern, her kind suspicions there
The wretch, that once sang wildly, danced, and laugh'd,
And suck'd in dizzy madness with his draught,
Has wept a silent flood, reversed his ways,
Is sober, meek, benevolent, and prays,
Feeds sparingly, communicates his store,
Abhors the craft he boasted of before,
And he that stole has learn'd to steal no more
Well spake the prophet,¹ Let the desert sing,
Where sprang the thorn, the spiry fir shall spring.
And where unsightly and rank thistles grow,
Shall grow the myrtle and luxuriant yew

Go now, and with important tone demand
On what foundation virtue is to stand,
If self-exalting claims be turn'd adrift,
And grace be grace indeed, and life a gift;
The poor reclaim'd inhabitant, his eyes
Glist'ning at once with pity and surprise,
Amazed that shadows should obscure the sight
Of one whose birth was in a land of light,

¹ Jer'ah iv 12, 13.

Shall answer, Hope, sweet Hope, has set me free,
And made all pleasures else mere dross to me

These, amidst scenes as waste as if denied
The common care that waits on all beside,
Wild as if nature there, void of all good,
Play'd only gambols in a frantic mood—
Yet charge not heav'nly skill with having plann'd
A plaything world unworthy of his hand—

Can see his love, though secret evil lurks
In all we touch, stamp'd plainly on his works,
Deem life a blessing with its num'rous woes,
Nor spurn away a gift a God bestows

Hard task indeed, o'er arctic seas to roam!
Is hope exotic? grows it not at home?

Yes, but an object bright as orient morn,
May press the eye too closely to be borne,
A distant virtue we can all confess,

It hurts our pride and moves our envy less

Leuconomos¹ (beneath well sounding Greek
I slur a name a poet must not speak)

Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,

And bore the pelting scorn of half an age,

The very butt of slander, and the blot

For ev'ry dart that malice ever shot

The man that mention'd him at once dismiss'd

All mercy from his lips, and sneer'd and hiss'd,

His crimes were such as Sodom never knew,

And Perjury stood up to swear all true,

His aim was mischief, and his zeal pretence,

His speech rebellion against common sense,

A knave when tried on honesty's plain rule,

And when by that of reason, a mere fool,

The world's best comfort was, his doom was pass'd,

Die when he might, he must be damn'd at last

Now truth perform thine office, waft aside

The curtain drawn by prejudice and pride

¹ Whitefield; among the stories which Perjury authenticated was, I suppose, the following tale of Walpole, in a letter to the Earl of Stafford, July 6, 1781:—"The apostle Whitefield is come to some shame. He went to Lady Huntingdon lately and asked for forty pounds for some distressed saint or other. She said she had not so much money in the house, but would give it him the first time she had. He was very pressing, but in vain. At last he said, 'There's your watch and trinkets, you don't want such vanities,—I will have that.' She would have put him off; but he persisting she said, 'Well, if you must have it, you must.' About a fortnight afterwards, going to his house and being carried to his wife's chamber, among the paraphernalia of ribbons. She tells the story herself."

Reveal (the man is dead)¹ to wond'ring eyes,
This more than monster in his proper guise

He loved the world that hated him the tear
That dropp'd upon his Bible was sincere
Assail'd by scandal and the tongue of strife,
His only answer was a blameless life,
And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's int'rest in his heart
Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,
Were copied close in him, and well transcribed,
He follow'd Paul his zeal a kindred flame,
His apostolic charity the same,
Like him cross'd cheerfully tempestuous seas,
Forsaking country, kindred, friends, and ease;
Like him he labour'd, and like him, content
To bear it, suffer'd shame where'er he went

Blush calumny¹ and write upon his tomb,
If honest eulogy can spare thee room,
Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,
Which, aim'd at him, have pierc'd th' offended skies
And say, Blot out my sin, confess'd, deplored,
Against thine image in thy saint, O Lord!

No blinder bigot, I maintain it still,
Than he that must have pleasure, come what will,
He laughs, whatever weapon truth may draw,
And deems her sharp artillery mere straw
Scripture indeed is plain, but God and he
On scripture-ground are sure to disagree,
Some wiser rule must teach him how to live,
Than that his Maker has seen fit to give,
Supple and flexible as Indian cane,
To take the bend his appetites ordain,
Contriv'd to suit frail nature's crazy case,
And reconcile his lusts with saving grace

¹ Whitefield died (1770) in his fifty seventh year. The late Mr Foster (*Contributions to Selective Literature*, ii 200) observes:—"According to the testimony of all his hearers that have left memorials of him, he had an energy and happy combination of the passions, so very extraordinary as to constitute a commanding species of sublimity of character. In their swell, their fluctuations, their very turbulence, these passions so faithfully followed the nature of the subject, and with such irresistible evidence of being clear of all design of oratorical management, that they bore all the dignity of the subject along with them and never appeared in their most ungovernable emotions, either extravagant or ludicrous, to any but minds of the coldest or profane order." Unquestionably Whitefield was a great actor, but thoroughly identified with, and intensely believing, his part. George Story, one of the earliest and cleverest of the Methodists, was in the habit of frequenting Whitefield's Chapel on Sundays, and the play house during the week. "Nor could I," he says, "discern any difference between Mr Whitefield's preaching, and acting a good tragedy." This was before his conversion.

By this, with nice precision of design
 He draws upon life's map a zigzag line,
 That shows how far 'tis safe to follow sin,
 And where his danger and God's wrath begun
 By this he forms, as pleased he sports along,
 His well-poised estimate of right and wrong,
 And finds the modish manners of the day,
 Though loose, as harmless as an infant's play.

Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,
 With what materials, on what ground you please,
 Your hope shall stand unblamed, perhaps admired,
 If not that hope the Scripture has required
 The strange conceits, vain projects, and wild dreams
 With which hypocrisy for ever teems,
 (Though other follies strike the public eye,
 And raise a laugh) pass unmolested by,
 But if unblamable in word and thought
 A man arise, a man whom God has taught,
 With all Elijah's dignity of tone,
 And all the love of the beloved John,
 To storm the citadels they build in air.
 And smite th' untemper'd wall, 'tis death to spare,
 To sweep away all refuge of lies,
 And place, instead of quirks themselves devise,
 LAMA SABACHTHANI before their eyes,
 To prove that without Christ, all gain is loss,
 All hope, despair, that stands not on his Cross,
 Except the few his God may have impress'd,
 A tenfold frenzy seizes all the rest.

Throughout mankind, the Christian kind at least,
 There dwells a consciousness in ev'ry breast,
 That folly ends where genuine hope begins,
 And he that finds his heav'n must lose his sins.

Nature opposes with her utmost force
 This riving stroke, this ultimate divorce,
 And while religion seems to be her view
 Hates with a deep sincerity *the true*,
 For this of all that ever influenced man,
 Since Abel worshipp'd, or the world began,
 This only spares no lust, admits no plea,
 But makes him, if at all, completely free,
 Sounds forth the signal as she mounts her car.
 Of an eternal, universal war,
 Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles,
 Scorns with the same indifference frowns and
 smiles

Drives through the realms of sin, where riot reels,
 And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels !
 Hence all that is in man, pride, passion, art,
 Pow'rs of the mind, and feelings of the heart,
 Insensible of truth's almighty charms,
 Starts at her first approach, and sounds to arms !
 While Bigotry, with well-dissembled fears,
 His eyes shut fast, his fingers in his ears,
 Mighty to parry, and push by God's word
 With senseless noise, his argument the sword,
 Pretends a zeal for godliness and grace,
 And spits abhorrence in the Christian's face.

Parent of hope, immortal Truth, make known
 Thy deathless wreaths, and triumphs all thine own
 The silent progress of thy pow'r is such,
 Thy means so feeble, and despised so much,
 That few believe the wonders thou hast wrought,
 And none can teach them but whom thou hast
 taught

Oh see me sworn to serve thee, and command
 A painter's skill into a poet's hand,
 That while I trembling trace a work divine,
 Fancy may stand aloof from the design,
 And light and shade and ev'ry stroke be thine

If ever thou hast felt another's pain,
 If ever, when he sigh'd, hast sigh'd again,
 If ever on thine eyelid stood the tear
 That pity had engender'd, drop one here
 This man was happy—had the world's good word
 And with it ev'ry joy it can afford,
 Friendship and love seem'd tenderly at strife,
 Which most should sweeten his untroubled life,
 Politely learn'd, and of a gentle race,
 Good-breeding and good sense gave all a grace,
 And, whether at the toilette of the fair
 He laugh'd and trifled, made him welcome there;
 Or, if in masculine debate he shared,
 Insured him mute attention and regard
 Alas how changed ! expressive of his mind,
 His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclined,
 Those awful syllables, hell, death, and sin,
 Though whisper'd, plainly tell what works within
 That conscience there performs her proper part,
 And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart,
 Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,
 He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends

Hard task! for one who lately knew no care
 And harder still as learnt beneath despair:
 His hours no longer pass unmark'd away,
 A dark importance saddens every day,
 He hears the notice of the clock, perplex'd,
 And cries,—Perhaps eternity strikes next
 Sweet music is no longer music here,
 And laughter sounds like madness in his ear,
 His grief the world of all her pow'r disarms,
 Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charm
 God's holy word, once trivial in his view,
 Now, by the voice of his experience, true,
 Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone
 Must spring that hope he pants to make his own

Now let the bright reverse be known abroad,
 Say, man's a worm, and pow'r belongs to God
 As when a felon, whom his country's laws
 Have justly doom'd for some atrocious cause
 Expects in darkness and heart-chilling fears,
 The shameful close of all his misspent years,
 If chance, on heavy pinions slowly borne,
 A tempest usher in the dreaded morn,
 Upon his dungeon walls the lightnings play,
 The thunder seems to summon him away,
 The warder at the door his key applies,
 Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies
 If then, just then, all thoughts of mercy lost,
 When hope, long ling'ring, at last yields the ghost,
 The sound of pardon pierce his startled ear,
 He drops at once his fetters and his fear,
 A transport glows in all he looks and speaks
 And the first thankful tears bedew his cheeks
 Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs
 The comfort of a few poor added days,
 Invades, possesses, and o'erwhelms the soul
 Of him whom hope has with a touch made whole
 'Tis heav'n, all heav'n descending on the wings
 Of the glad legions of the King of kings,
 'Tis more—'tis God diffused through ev'ry part,
 'Tis God himself triumphant in his heart
 Oh, welcome now, the sun's once hated light,
 His noonday beams were never half so bright,
 Not kindred minds alone are call'd t'employ
 Their hours, their days in list'ning to his joy,
 Unconscious nature, all that he surveys,
 Rocks, groves, and streams, must join him in his praise

These are thy glorious works, eternal Truth,
 The scoff of wither'd age and beardless youth
 These move the censur'd and illib'ial grin
 Of fools that hate thee, and delight in sin
 But these shall last when night has quench'd the pole,
 And heav'n is all departed as a scoll
 And when, as Justice has long since decreed,
 This earth shall blaze, and a new world succeed,
 Then these thy glorious works, and they that share
 That Hope which can alone exclude despair,
 Shall live exempt from weakness and decay,
 The brightest wonders of an endless day

Happy the bard (if that fair name belong
 To him that blends no fable with his song)
 Whose lines uniting, by an honest art,
 The faithful monitor's and poet's part,
 Seek to delight, that they may mend mankind,
 And while they captivate, inform the mind
 Still happier, if he till a thankful soil,
 And fruit reward his honourable toil
 But happier far who comfort those that wait
 To hear plain truth, at Judah's hallow'd gate,
 Their language simple as their manners meek,
 No shining ornaments have they to seek,
 Nor labour they, nor time, nor talents waste
 In sorting flowers to suit a fickle taste,
 But while they speak the wisdom of the skies,
 Which art can only darken and disguise,
 Th' abundant harvest, recompence divine,
 Repays their work—the gleanings only, mine

CHARITY.

*Quæ nihil majus melliusve terris
 fata donavere, bonique divi,
 Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
 Tempora priscum*

HOR. Lib. iv. Ode ii.

FAIREST and foremost of the train that wait
 On man's most dignified, and happiest state,
 Whether we name thee Charity, or love,
 Chief grace below, and all in all above,
 Prosper (I press thee with a pow'ful plea)
 A task I venture on, impel'd by thee

Oh, never seen but in thy blest effects,
 Nor felt but in the soul that Heav'n selects,
 Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known
 To other hearts, must have thee in his own
 Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,
 Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires
 And, though disgraced and slighted, to redeem
 A poet's name, by making thee the theme

God, working ever on a social plan,
 By various ties attaches man to man
 He made at first, though free and unconfin'd,
 One man the common father of the kind,
 That ev'ry tribe, though placed as he sees best,
 Where seas or deserts part them from the rest,
 Differing in language, manners, or in face,
 Might feel themselves allied to all the race
 When Cook¹—lamented, and with tears as just
 As ever mingled with heroic dust,
 Steer'd Britain's oak into a world unknown,
 And in his country's glory sought his own,
 Wherever he found man, to nature true,
 The rights of man were sacred in his view
 He sooth'd with gifts and greeted with a smile
 The simple native of the new found isle,
 He spurn'd the wretch that slighted or withstood
 The tender argument of kindred blood,
 Nor would endure that any should control
 His freeborn brethren of the southern pole

But though some nobler minds a law respect,
 That none shall with impunity neglect,
 In baser souls unnumber'd evils meet,
 To thwart its influence, and its end defeat
 While Cook is loved for savage lives he saved,
 See Cortez odious for a world enslaved!
 Where wast thou then sweet Charity, where then
 Thou tutelary friend of helpless men?
 Wast thou in Monkish cells and nunn'ries found,
 Or building hospitals on English ground?
 No—Mammon makes the world his legatee
 Through fear, not love, and Heav'n abhors the fee,
 Wherever found (and all men need thy care)
 Nor age nor infancy could find thee there

¹ Killed at Owhyhee, 1779. "These Voyages (pointing to the three large volumes of 'Voyages to the South Sea,' which were just come out), who will read them through? A man had better work his way before the mast."—"Johnson, by Croker, viii. 211.) Cowper found more abundant enter-

The hand, that slew till it could slay no more,
 Was glued to the sword-hilt with Indian gore,
 Their prince, as justly seated on his throne,
 As vain imperial Philip on his own,¹
 Trick'd out of all his royalty by art,
 That stripp'd him bare, and broke his honest heart,
 Died by the sentence of a shaven priest,
 For scorning what they taught him to detest
 How dark the veil that intercepts the blaze
 Of Heav'n's mysterious purposes and ways,
 God stood not, though he seem'd to stand aloof,
 And at this hour the conqu'ror feels the proof
 The wreath he won drew down an instant curse,
 The fretting plague is in the public purse,
 The canker'd spoil corrodes the pining state,
 Starved by that indolence their mines create
 Oh, could their ancient Incas rise again,
 How would they take up Israel's taunting strain!
 Art thou too fall'n, Iberia? Do we see
 The robber and the murth'rer weak as we?
 Thou that hast wasted earth, and dared despise
 Alike the wrath and morey of the skies,
 Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid
 Low in the pits thine avarice has made
 We come with joy from our eternal rest,
 To see the oppressor in his turn oppress'd.
 Art thou the God the thunder of whose hand
 Roll'd over all our desolated land,
 Shook principalities and kingdoms down,
 And made the mountains tremble at his frown?
 The sword shall light upon thy boasted pow'rs,
 And waste them, as thy sword has wasted ours.
 'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfils,
 And vengeance executes what justice wills
 Again—the band of commerce was design'd
 T' associate all the branches of mankind,
 And if a boundless plenty be the robe,
 Trade is the golden girdle of the globe
 Wise to promote whatever end he means,
 God opens fruitful nature's various scenes,
 Each climate needs what other climes produce
 And offers something to the gen'ral use,

¹ Charles the Fifth was the "imperial" despot, for Philip had not yet replaced him upon the Spanish throne. The picture of Montezuma, here only poetically true, may be read in the eloquent page of Prescott, or in Robertson's "America," v 177 Edit 1801

No land but listens to the common call,
 And in return receives supply from all,
 This genial intercourse and mutual aid,
 Cheers what were else an universal shade,
 Calls nature from her ivy mantled den,
 And softens human rockwork into men
 Ingenious Art with her expressive face
 Steps forth to fashion and refine the race,
 Not only fills necessity's demand,
 But overcharges her capacious hand,
 Capricious taste itself can crave no more,
 Than she supplies from her abounding store,
 She strikes out all that luxury can ask,
 And gains new vigour at her endless task
 Hers is the spacious arch, the shapely spire,
 The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre,
 From her the canvass borrows light and shade,
 And verse, more lasting, lines that never fade
 She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,
 Gives difficulty all the grace of ease.
 And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,
 Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound
 These are the gifts of art, and art thrives most,
 Where commerce has enrich'd the busy coast:
 He catches all improvements in his flight,
 Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight,
 Imports what others have invented well,
 And stirs his own to match them, or excel
 'Tis thus reciprocating each with each,
 Alternately the nations learn and teach,
 While Providence enjoins to every soul
 An union with the vast terraqueous whole
 Heav'n speed the canvass gallantly unfurl'd
 To furnish and accommodate a world,
 To give the Pole the produce of the sun,
 And knit the unsocial climates into one —
 Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave
 Impel the fleet whose errand is to save,
 To succour wasted regions, and replace
 The smile of opulence in sorrow's face —
 Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
 Impede the bark that ploughs the deep serene,
 Charged with a freight transcending in its worth
 The gems of India, nature's rarest birth,
 That flies like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,
 A herald of God's love, to pagan lands —

But, ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,
 For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,
 Who drive a loathsome traffic, gaugo and span,
 And buy the muscles and the bones of man?
 The tender ties of father, husband, friend,
 All bonds of nature in that moment end,
 And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,
 A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death
 The sable warrior, frantic with regret
 Of her he loves, and never can forget,
 Loses in tears the far receding shore,
 But not the thought that they must meet no more,
 Deprived of her and freedom at a blow,
 What has he left that he can yet forego?
 Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resign'd,
 He feels his body's bondage in his mind,
 Puts off his gen'rous nature, and, to suit
 His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.

Oh, most degrading of all ills that wait
 On man, a mourner in his best estate!
 All other sorrows virtue may endure,
 And find submission more than half a cure,
 Grief is itself a med'cine, and bestow'd
 T' improve the fortitude that bears the load,
 To teach the wand'rer, as his woes increase,
 The path of wisdom, all whose paths are peace
 But slav'ry!—virtue dreads it as her grave,
 Patience itself is meanness in a slave
 Or if the will and sovereignty of God
 Bid suffer it awhile, and kiss the rod,
 Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,
 And snap the chain the moment when you may
 Nature imprints upon whato'er we see
 That has a heart and life in it, Be free,
 The beasts are chartered—no other ago nor force
 Can quell the love of freedom in a horse
 He breaks the cord that hold him at the rack,
 And, conscious of an unencumber'd back,
 Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,
 Loose fly his forelock and his ample mane,
 Responsive to the distant neigh he neighs,
 Nor stops till, overleaping all delays,
 He finds the pasture where his fellows graze

Canst thou, and honour'd with a Christian
 name,
 Buy what is woman-bought, and feel no shame?

Trade in the blood of innocence, and plead
 Expedience as a warrant for the deed?
 So may the wolf, whom famine has made bold
 To quit the forest and invade the fold,
 So may the ruffian who with ghostly glido,
 Dagger in hand, steals close to your bedside,
 Not he, but his emergence¹ forced the door,
 He found it inconvenient to be poor
 Has God then giv'n its sweetness to the cane
 Unless his laws be trampled on—in vain?
 Built a brave world, which cannot yet subsist,
 Unless his right to rule it be dismiss'd?
 Impudent blasphemy! so folly pleads,
 And, av'rice being judge, with ease succeeds
 But grant the plea, and let it stand for just,
 That man make man his prey because he *must*,
 Still there is room for pity to abate
 And soothe the sorrows of so sad a state
 A Briton knows, or if he knows it not,
 The Scripture placed within his reach, he ought,
 That souls have no discriminating hue,
 Alike important in their Makor's view,
 That none are free from blemish since the fall,
 And love divine has paid one price for all
 The wretch, that works and weeps without relief,
 Has one that notices his silent grief,
 He, from whose hands alone all pow'r proceeds,
 Ranks its abuse among the foulest deeds,
 But *marks* the man that treads his fellow down
 Begone, the whip and bell in that hard hand,
 Are hateful ensigns of usurp'd command,
 Not Mexico could purchase his only blame
 To scourge him, heav'n has an avenging rod,
 Remember, Heav'n has an avenging rod,
 To smite the poor is treason against God.
 Trouble is grudgingly and hardly brook'd,
 While life's sublimest joys are overlook'd
 We wander o'er a sun burnt thirsty soil,
 Murmuring and weary of our daily toil,

¹ A very uncommon form of *emergence*; Brooke uses it in his apostrophe
 Venus Urania—

"When from the deep thy bright emergence sprung,
 And nature on thy form divinely hung"
Universal Beauty, b. 1.

Forget t' enjoy the palm-tree's offer'd shade,
 Or taste the fountain in the neighb'ring glade
 Else who would lose, that had the pow'r t' improve,
 Th' occasion of transmuting fear to love?
 Oh, 'tis a godlike privilege to save,
 And he that scorns it is himself a slave —
 Inform his mind, one flash of heav'nly day,
 Would heal his heart and melt his chains away,
 'Beauty for ashes' is a gift indeed,
 And slaves, by truth enlarged, are doubly freed
 Then would he say, submissive at thy feet,
 While gratitude and love made service sweet,—
 My dear deliv'rer out of hopeless night,
 Whose bounty bought me but to give me light,
 I was a bondman on my native plain,
 Sin forged and ignorance made fast the chain,
 Thy lips have shed instruction as the dew,
 Taught me what path to shun, and what pursue,¹
 Farewell my former joys! I sigh no more
 For Africa's once loved, benighted shore,
 Serving a benefactor I am free,
 At my best home, if not exiled from thee

Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds
 A stream of lib'ral and heroic deeds,
 The swell of pity, not to be confined
 Within the scanty limits of the mind,
 Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands,
 A rich deposit, on the bord'ring lands
 These have an ear for *his* paternal call,
 Who makes some rich for the supply of all,
 God's gift with pleasure in his praise employ,
 And THORNTON² is familiar with the joy

Oh, could I worship aught beneath the skies,
 That earth hath seen, or fancy can devise,
 Thine altar, sacred Liberty, should stand,
 Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,
 With fragrant turf, and flow'rs as wild and fair
 As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer air

¹ "What conscience dictates to be done,
 Or warns me not to do;
 This, teach me more than hell to shun;
 That, more than heaven pursue"

POPE'S *Universal Prayer*

² The name of a London merchant, whose prayers and alms went up for a memorial of him during a busy and Christian life. The stream of his charity flowed abundantly upon Olney. He died in 1780

Only, as ever on the mountain's height
 The peep of morning shed a dawning light;
 Again, when evening in her sober vest
 Drew the gray curtain of the fading west,
 My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise
 For the chief blessings of my fairest days
 But that were sacrilege—praise is not thine,
 But His who gave thee and preserves thee mine
 Else I would say, and as I spike, bid fly
 A captive bird into the boundless sky,
 This triple realm adores thee—thou art come
 From Sparta hither, and art here at home,
 We feel thy force still active, at this hour
 Enjoy immunity from priestly pow'r,
 While conscience, happier than in ancient years,
 Owns no superior but the God she fears
 Propitious spirit! yet expunge a wrong
 Thy rights have suffer'd, and our land, too long,
 Teach mercy to ten thousand hearts that share
 The fears and hopes of a commercial care,
 Prisons expect the wicked, and were built
 To bind the lawless and to punish guilt,
 But shipwreck, earthquake, battle, fire, and flood,
 Are mighty mischiefs, not to be withstood,
 And honest merit stands on slippery ground,
 Where covert guile and artifice abound
 Let just restraint, for public peace design'd,
 Chain up the wolves and tigers of mankind,
 The foe of virtue has no claim to thee,
 But let insolent innocence go free
 Patron of else the most despised of men,
 Accept the tribute of a stranger's pen,
 Verse, like the laurel its immortal meed,
 Should be the guerdon of a noble deed,
 I may alarm thee, but I fear the shame
 (Charity chosen as my theme and aim)
 I must incur, forgetting Howard's name
 Blest with all wealth can give thee, to resign
 Joys doubly sweet to feelings quick as thine,
 To quit the bliss thy rural scenes bestow,¹
 To seek a nobler amidst scenes of woe,
 To traverse seas, range kingdoms, and bring home—
 Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,

¹ Cardington, near Bedford, the home of his infancy and his manhood,
 and to which his heart always turned with deep affection.

But knowledge such as only dungeons teach,
And only sympathy like thine could reach,
That grief, sequester'd from the public stage,
Might smooth her feathers and enjoy her cage,—
Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal
The boldest patriot might be proud to feel
Oh, that the voice of clamour and debate,
That pleads for peace till it disturbs the state,
Were hush'd in favour of thy gen'rous plea,
The poor thy clients, and Heaven's smile thy fee
Philosophy, that does not dream or stray,
Walks arm in arm with nature all his way,
Compasses earth, dives into it, ascends
Whatever steep inquiry recommends,
Sees planetary wonders smoothly roll
Round other systems under her control,
Drinks wisdom at the milky stream of light
That cheers the silent journey of the night,
And brings at his return a bosom charged
With rich instruction, and a soul enlarged
The treasured sweets of the capacious plan,
That heav'n spreads wide before the view of man,
All prompt his pleased pursuit, and to pursue
Still prompt him with a pleasure always new
He too has a connecting pow'r, and draws
Man to the centre of the common cause,
Aiding a dubious and deficient sight
With a new medium and a purer light
All truth is precious if not all divine,
And what dilates the pow'rs must needs refine,
He reads the skies, and watching ev'ry change,
Provides the faculties an ampler range,
And wins mankind, as his attempts prevail,
A prouder station on the gen'ral scale
But reason still, unless divinely taught,
Whate'er she learns, learns nothing as she ought
The lamp of revelation only, shows,
What human wisdom cannot but oppose,
That man, in nature's richest mantle clad,
And graced with all philosophy can add,
Though fair without, and luminous within,
Is still the progeny and heir of sin
Thus taught down falls the plumage of his pride,
He feels his need of an unerring guide,
And knows that falling he shall rise no more,
Unless the pow'r that bade him stand, restore.

'This is indeed philosophy, this known,
 Makes wisdom, worthy of the name, his own;
 And without this, whatever he discuss,
 Whether the space between the stars and us,
 Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,
 Weigh sunbeams, carve a fly, or spit a flea,
 The solemn trisler with his boasted skill,
 Toils much, and is a solemn trisler still,
 Blind was he born, and, his misguided eyes
 Grown dim in trifling studies, blind he dies
 Self knowledge, truly learn'd, of course implies
 The rich possession of a nobler prize,
 For self to self, and God to man reveal'd,
 (Two themes to nature's eye for ever seal'd,)
 Are taught by rays that fly with equal pace
 From the same centre of enlight'ning grace
 Here stay thy foot, how copious and how clear,
 Th' o'erflowing well of Charity springs hero!
 Hark! 'tis the music of a thousand rills,
 Some through the groves, some down the sloping hills
 Winding a secret or an open course,
 And all supplied from an eternal source:
 The ties of nature do but feebly bind,
 And commerce partially reclaims mankind,
 Philosophy without his heavenly guide,
 May blow up self conceit and nourish pride,
 But while his province is the reas'ning part,
 Has still a veil of midnight on his heart
 'Tis Truth divine, exhibited on earth,
 Gives Charity her being and her birth.
 Suppose (when thought is warm and fancy flows—
 What will not argument sometimes suppose?)
 An isle possess'd by creatures of our kind,
 Endued with reason, yet by nature blind,
 Let supposition lend her aid once more,
 And land some grave optician on the shore;
 He claps his lens, if haply they may see,
 Close to the part where vision ought to be,
 But finds that, though his tubes assist the sight,
 They cannot give it, or make darkness light
 He reads wise lectures, and describes aloud,
 A sense they know not, to the wond'ring crowd,
 As men of light and the prismatic hues,
 As men of depth in erudition use,
 But all he gains for his harangue is—Well—
 What monstrous lies some travellers will tell!

The soul, whose sight all-quick'ning grace renews,
 Takes the resemblance of the good she views,
 As di'monds, stripp'd of their opaque disguise,
 Reflect the noonday glory of the skies
 She speaks of him, her author, guardian, friend,
 Whose love knew no beginning, knows no end,
 In language warm as all that love inspires,
 And, in the glow of her intense desires,
 Pants to communicate her noble fires
 She sees a world stark blind to what employs
 Her eager thought, and feeds her flowing joys,
 Though wisdom hail them, heedless of her call,
 Flies to save some, and feels a pang for all
 Herself as weak as her support is strong,
 She feels that frailty she denied so long,
 And from a knowledge of her own disease,
 Learns to compassionate the sick she sees
 Here see, acquitted of all vain pretence,
 The reign of genuine Charity commence,
 Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,
 She still is kind, and still she perseveres,
 The truth she loves, a sightless world blasphemo,
 'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream,
 The danger they discern not, they deny,
 Laugh at their only remedy, and die
 But still a soul, thus touch'd, can never cease
 Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace,
 Pure in her aim and in her temper mild,
 Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child,
 She makes excuses where she might condemn,
 Reviled by those that hate her, prays for them,
 Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast,
 The worst suggested, she believes the best,
 Not soon provoked, however stung and teased,
 And, if perhaps made angry, soon appeased,
 She rather waives than will dispute her right,
 And, injured, makes forgiveness her delight

Such was the portrait an apostle¹ drew,
 The bright original was one he knew,
 Heav'n held his hand, the likeness must be true
 When one, that holds communion with the skies,
 Has fill'd his urn where these pure waters rise,
 And once more mingles with us meaner things.
 'Tis ev'n as if an angel shook his wings;

Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,¹
 That tells us whence his treasures are supplied
 So when a ship, well freighted with the stores
 The sun matures on India's spicy shores,
 Has dropp'd her anchor and her canvass furl'd,
 In some safe haven of our western world,
 'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went,
 The gale informs us, laden with the scent
 Some seek, when queazy conscience has its qualms
 To lull the painful malady with alms,
 But Charity, not feign'd, intends alone
 Another's good—their centres in their own,
 And too short-lived to reach the realms of peace
 Must cease for ever when the poor shall cease
 Flavia, most tender of her own good name,
 Is rather careless of a sister's fame,
 Her superfluous tho' poor supplies,
 But if she touch a character, it dies :
 The seeming virtue weigh'd against the vice,
 She deems all safe, for she has paid the price,
 No charity but alms aught values she,
 Except in porcelain on her mantel-tree :
 How many deeds, with which the world has rung,
 From pride in league with ignorance have sprung,
 But God o'errules all human follies still,
 And bends the tough materials to his will.
 A conflagration, or a wintry flood,
 Has left some hundreds without home or food,
 Extravagance and ar'rice shall subscribe,
 While fame and self complacence are the bribe ;
 The brief proclaim'd, it visits ev'ry pew,
 But first the Squire's, a compliment but due
 With slow deliberation he unties
 His glitt'ring purse, that envy of all eyes,
 And while the clerk just puzzles out the psalm,
 Slides guinea behind guinea in his palm,
 'Till finding, what he might have found before,
 A smaller piece amidst the precious store,
 Pinch'd close between his finger and his thumb,
 He half exhibits, and then drops the sum ;

¹ Cowper remembered the beautiful description of the angel in "Paradise
 Lost," v. 209
² "At every word a reputation dies"—*Rape of the Lock* iii. 16
³ A mantel to a fireplace "Upon the mantel tree, for I am a pretty
 curious observer stood a pot of Cambrivie electuary, with a stick of
 liquorish.—*Tatler*, No 263.

Gold to be sure!—throughout the town 'tis told
 How the good Squire gives never less than gold.
 From motives such as his, though not the best,
 Springs in due time supply for the distress'd,
 Not less effectual than what love bestows,
 Except that office chips it as it goes

But lest I seem to sin against a friend,
 And wound the grace I mean to recommend,
 (Though vice derided with a just design
 Implies no trespass against love divine,)
 Once more I would adopt the graver style,
 A teacher should be sparing of his smile

Unless a love of virtue light the flame,
 Satire is more than those he brands, to blame,
 He hides behind a magisterial air
 His own offences, and strips others bare,
 Affects indeed a most humane concern
 That men if gently tutor'd will not learn,
 That mulish folly, not to be reclaim'd
 By softer methods, must be made ashamed,
 But (I might instance in St. Patrick's dean)¹
 Too often rails to gratify his spleen
 Most ent'rists are indeed a public scourge,
 Their mildest physic is a farrier's purge,
 Their acid temper turns, as soon as stirr'd,
 The milk of their good purpose all to curd,
 Their zeal begotten, as their works rehearse,
 By lean despair upon an empty purse,
 The wild assassins start into the street,
 Prepared to poinard whome'er they meet,
 No skill in swordsmanship, however just,
 Can be secure against a madman's thrust,
 And even virtue so unfairly match'd,
 Although immortal, may be prick'd or scratch'd
 When scandal has new minted an old lie,
 Or tax'd invention for a fresh supply,
 'Tis call'd a satire, and the world appears
 Gath'ring around it with erected ears,
 A thousand names are toes'd into the crowd,
 Some whisper'd softly, and some twang'd aloud
 Just as the experience of an author's brain
 Suggests it safe or dangerous to be plain.

¹ Swift

² Wisdom: so, in *Hudibras*, *Sidrophel*, looking wise,

"—— put his face into a posture
 Of sapience, and began to bluster"

Strange! how the frequent interjected dash
 Quicken a market, and helps off the trash,
 Th' important letters, that include the rest,
 Serve as a key to those that are suppress'd,
 Conjecture gripes the victims in his paw,
 The world is charm'd, and Serib escapes the law,
 So when the cold damp shades of night prevail,
 Worms may be caught by either head or tail,
 Forcibly drawn from many a close recess,
 They meet with little pity, no redress,
 Plunged in the stream they lodge upon the mud
 Food for the famish'd rovers of the flood.
 All zeal for a reform that gives offence
 To peace and charity, is mere pretence
 A bold remark, but which if well applied,
 Would humble many a tow'ring poet's pride
 Perhaps the man was in a sportive fit,
 And had no other play-place for his wit,
 Perhaps enchanted with the love of fame
 He sought the jewel in his neighbour's shame,
 Perhaps—whatever end he might pursue,
 The cause of virtue could not be his view
 At ev'ry stroke wit flashes in our eyes,
 The turns are quick, the polish'd points surprise,
 But shine with cruel and tremendous charms,
 That while they please possess us with alarms
 On havo I seen (and hasten'd to the sight
 Where stands that monument of ancient pow'r,
 Named with emphatic dignity, the Tow'r,
 Guns, halberts, swords and pistols, great and small,
 In starry forms disposed upon the wall,
 We wonder, as we gaze upon the wall,
 That brass and steel should make so fine a show,
 But though we praise th' exact designer's skill,
 Account them implements of mischief still
 No works shall find acceptance in that day,
 When all disguises shall be rent away,
 That square not truly with the Scripture plan,
 Nor spring from love to God, or love to man
 As he ordains things sordid in their birth
 And though the soul shall seek superior orbs,
 Whate'er this world produces, it absorbs,
 To be resolved into their parent earth,
 So self starts nothing but what tends apace
 Home to the goal, where it began the race

Such as ever had seen our virgin true
 If it be possible, that even so she free,
 If it may lay us where she is brought,
 We glorify that still yet him we ought
 Such virtues had need prove their own reward
 The judges of all men esteem them no reward
 True Christ's wife is divinely married,
 And he is the love from which it rose at first,
 Thence our hope and in the rudest scene,
 Still a love which is unending green;
 His blood is the shadow of supply
 To feed on each the growth above the sky
 To let us know who found us and redeemed,
 To let us know the power and the deed,
 To see a God stretch forth his human hand,
 To up' the boundless scenes of his command,
 To see that in a form like ours,
 He bore the cross his feet the infernal pow'rs,
 To let us know the power, due to claim
 The strength he won so dearly in our name
 That thus and above all he glit, he condescends
 To call for faith and trust in him his friends,
 That in the love of his love, that space he deems
 To let us know the exertion of his beams,
 And shines as if impatient to bestow
 Love and a longbow upon woman below,
 That in his arms a never dying flame
 Though feeble in degree in kind the same,
 Like him, the soul, thus kindled from above,
 Spreads wide her arms of universal love,
 And, still enlarged as she receives the grace,
 Includes creation in her close embrace
 Behold a Christian—and without the fires
 The splendor of that name alone inspires,
 Though all accomplishments, all knowledge meet,
 To make the shining prodigy complete,
 Whose ever boasts that name—behold a cheat

Were love in these the world's last dotting years
 As frequent, as the want of it appears,
 The churches warmed, they would no longer hold
 Such frozen figures stiff as they are cold,
 Relenting forms would lose their power or cease,
 And even the dipt and sprinled live in peace,
 Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,
 And flow in free communion with the rest.

The statesman, skill'd in projects dark and deep,
 Might burn his unclos'd Machiavel,¹ and sleep;
 His budget, often fill'd yet always poor,
 Might swing at ease behind his study door,
 No longer prey upon our annual rents,
 Nor scare the nation with its big contents.
 Disbanded legions freely might depart,
 And slaying man would cease to be an art
 No learned disputants would take the field,
 Sure not to conquer, and sure not to yield,
 Both sides deceived if rightly understood,
 Pelting each other for the public good
 Did Charity prevail, the press would prove
 A vehicle of virtue, truth and love,
 And I might spare myself the pains to show
 What few can learn, and all suppose they know.
 Thus have I sought to grace a serious lay
 With many a wild, indeed but flow'ry spray,
 In hopes to gain what else I must have lost,
 Th' attention pleasure has so much engross'd
 But if unhappily deceived I dream,
 And prove too weak for so divine a theme,
 Let Charity forgive me a mistake
 That zeal, not vanity, has chanced to make,
 And spare the poet for his subject sake

CONVERSATION

*Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus aëtri,
 Nec percussa juvant fluctu tam litorea, nec quæ
 Saxosæ inter decurrunt flumina valles*

VIRGIL, *Ecl.* v

THOUGH nature weigh our talents, and dispense
 To every man his modicum of sense,
 And Conversation in its better part
 May be esteem'd a gift, and not an art,
 Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
 On culture, and the sowing of the soil
 Words learn'd by rote a parrot may rehearse,
 But talking is not always to converse,
 Not more distinct from harmony divine
 The constant creaking of a country sign

¹ The reader, who is willing to hear a few words in arrest of the popular judgment, may turn to Mr. Hallam's "Literature of Europe," i. 657.

An alphabet in word employ
 Hour after hour the yet unletter'd boy,
 Sorting and punning with a deal of glee
 Those seeds of science called his A B C,
 So language in the mouths of the adult,
 Witne a its insignificant result,
 Too often prove an implement of play,
 A toy to play with, and pass time away,
 Collect at evening what the day brought forth,
 Compress the sum into its solid worth,
 And if it weigh th' importance of a fly,
 The scales are false, or Algebra a lie
 Sacred interpreter of human thought,
 How few respect or use thee as they ought!
 But all shall give account of ev'ry wrong
 Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue,
 Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,
 Or sell their glory at a market-price,
 Who vote for hue, or point it with lampoon,
 The dear bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon

There is a prudence in the speech of some,
 Wrath stays him, or else God would strike them dumb
 His wise forbearance has their end in view,
 They fill their measure and receive their due
 The heathen lawgivers of ancient days,
 Names almost worthy of a Christian's praise,
 Would drive them forth from the resort of men,
 And shut up ev'ry catyr in his den
 Oh come not ye near innocence and truth,
 Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth!
 Infectious as impure, your blighting pow'r
 Taints in its rudiments the promised flow'r
 Its odour perish'd and its charming hue,
 Thenceforth 'tis hateful for it smells of you.
 Not ev'n the vigorous and headlong rage
 Of adolescence, or a firmer age,
 Affords a plea allowable or just,
 For making speech the pimperer of lust,
 But when the breath of age commits the fault,
 'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault
 So wither'd stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,
 No longer fruitful and no longer green,
 The sapless wood divested of the bark,
 Grows fungous and in' as fire at ev'ry spark

Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife--
 Some men have surely then a peaceful life,

Whatever subject occupy discourse,
 The feats of *Vestris*,¹ or the naval force,
 Asseveration blust'ring in your face
 Makes contradiction such an hopeless case;
 In every tale they tell, or false, or true,
 Well known, or such as no man ever knew,
 They fix attention, heedless of your pain,
 With oaths like rivets forced into the brain,
 And even when sober truth prevails throughout,
 They swear it, till affirmation breeds a doubt
 A Persian, humble servant of the sun,
 Who though devout yet bigotry had none,
 Hearing a lawyer, grave in his address,
 With adjurations every word impress,
 Supposed the man a bishop, or at least,
 God's name so much upon his lips, a priest,
 Bow'd at the close with all his graceful airs,
 And begg'd an int'rest in his frequent pray'rs
 Go quit the rank to which ye stood preferr'd,
 Henceforth associate in one common herd,
 Religion, virtue, reason, common sense
 Pronounce your human form a false pretence,
 A mere disguise in which a devil lurks,
 Who yet betrays his secret by his works
 Ye pow'rs who rule the tongue, if such there are,
 And make colloquial happiness your care,
 Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,
 A duel in the form of a debate
 The clash of arguments and jar of words,
 Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
 Decide no question with their tedious length,
 For opposition gives opinion strength,
 Divert the champions prodigal of breath,
 And put the peaceably-disposed to death.
 Oh thwart me not, Sir Soph. at ev'ry turn,
 Nor carp at ev'ry flaw you may discern,
 Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,
 I am not, surely, always in the wrong,
 'Tis hard if all is false that I advance,
 A fool must now and then be right, by chance,
 Not that all freedom of dissent I blame,
 No—there I grant the privilege I claim.—
 A disputable point is no man's ground,
 Rove where you please, 'tis common all around,

¹ A celebrated Italian dancer, who died in 1608

Discourse may want an animated—No—
 To blush the surface and to make it flow,
 But still remember, if you mean to please,
 To press your point with modesty and ease
 The mark at which my juster aim I take,
 Is contradiction for its own dear sake,
 Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
 Knots and impediments make something hitch,
 Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,
 Your thread of argument is snapp'd again,
 The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
 Will judge *himself* deceived, and prove it too
 Vociferated logic kills me quite,
 A noisy man is always in the right,
 I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
 Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,
 And, when I hope his blunders are all out,
 Reply discreetly—to be sure—no doubt

DUNN is such a scrupulous good man—
 Yes—you may catch him tripping if you can
 He would not, with a peremptory tone,
 Assert the nose upon his face his own,
 With hesitation admirably slow,
 He humbly hopes, presumes it may be so
 His evidence, if he were call'd by law,
 To swear to some enormity he saw,
 For want of prominence and just relief,
 Would hang an honest man and save a thief
 Through constant dread of giving truth offence,
 He ties up all his hearers in suspense,
 Knows what he knows as if he knew it not,
 What he remembers seems to have forgot,
 His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,
 Centring at last in having none at all
 Yet though he tease and balk your list'ning ear,
 He makes one useful point exceeding clear,
 Howe'er ingenious on his darling theme,
 A sceptic in philosophy may seem,
 Reduced to practice, his beloved rule
 Would only prove him a consummate fool,
 Useless in him alike both brain and speech,
 Fate having placed all truth above his reach,
 His ambiguities his total sum,
 He might as well be blind and deaf and dumb

Where men of judgment creep and feel their way
 The Positive pronounce without dismay,

Their want of light and intellect supplied
 By sparks absurdity strikes out of pride,
 Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
 They always are decisive, clear, and strong,
 Where others toil with philosophic force,
 Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,
 Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
 And gains remote conclusions at a jump
 Their own defect, invisible to them,
 Seen in another they at once condemn,
 And though self idolized in every case,
 Hate their own likeness in a brother's face
 The cause is plain and not to be denied
 The proud are always most provoked by pride,
 Few competitions but engender spite,
 And those the most, whose neither has a right
 The point of honour has been deem'd of use,
 To teach good manners and to curb abuse,
 Admit it true, the consequence is clear,
 Our polish'd manners are a mask we wear,
 And at the bottom, barb'rous still and rude,
 We are restrain'd indeed, but not subdued,
 The very remedy, however sure,
 And savage in its principle appears,
 Tried, as it should be, by the fruit it bears
 'Tis hard indeed if nothing will defend
 Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end,
 That now and then a hero must de cease,
 That the surviving world may live in peace
 Perhaps at last, close scrutiny may show
 The practice dastardly and mean and low,
 That men engage in it compell'd by force,
 And fear, not courage, is its proper source,
 The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear
 Lest fops should censure us, and fools should sneer;
 At least to trample on our Maker's laws,
 And hazard life, for any or no cause,
 To rush into a fixt eternal state,
 Out of the very flames of rage and hate,
 Or send another shiv'ring to the bar,
 With all the guilt of such unnat'ral war,—
 Whatever use may urge, or honour plead,
 On reason's verdict is a madman's deed
 Am I to set my life upon a throw
 Because a bear is rude and surly? No—

Tell not as new what ev'rybody know²,
 And new or old, still hasten to a close,
 There, centring in a focus round and neat,
 Let all your rays of information meet
 What neither yields us profit or delight,
 Is like a nurse's lullaby at night,
 Guy Earl of Warwick and fair Eleanore,
 Or giant killing Jack would please me more
 The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,
 Makes half a sentence at a time enough,
 The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,
 Then pause, and puff—and speak, and pause again.
 Such often like the tube they so admire,
 Important triflers! have more smoke than fire
 Pernicious weed! whose scent the fair annoys,
 Unfriendly to society's chief joys,
 Thy worst effect is banishing for hours
 The sex whose presence civilizes ours
 Thou art indeed the drug a gard'ner wants,
 To poison vermin that infest his plants,
 But are we so to wit and beauty blind,
 As to despise the glory of our kind,
 And show the softest minds and fairest forms
 As little mercy, as he, grubs and worms?
 They dare not wait the riotous abuse,
 Thy thirst-creating steams at length produce,
 When wine has giv'n indecent language birth,
 And forced the flood gates of licentious mirth,
 For sea born Venus her attachment shows
 Still to that element from which she rose,
 And, with a quiet which no fumes disturb,
 Sips meek infusions of a milder herb
 Th' emphatic speaker dearly loves to oppose
 In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,
 As if the gnomon on his neighbour's pluz,
 Touch'd with a magnet had attracted his
 His whisper'd theme, dilated and at large,
 Proves after all a wind gun's airy charge,
 An extract of his diary—no more,
 A tasteless journal of the day before
 He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain
 Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stept home again,
 Resumed his purpose, had a world of talk
 With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.
 I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
 Adieu, dear sir! lest you should lose it now

I cannot talk with civet in the room,
 A fine pure gentleman that's all perfume,
 The sight's enough—no need to smell a beau—
 Who thrusts his nose into a raree-show?
 His odorifero is a' attempts to please,
 Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees,
 But we that make no honey though we sting,
 Poets, are sometimes apt to marvel the thing
 'Tis wrong to bring into a mixt resort,
 What makes some sick, and others *à la mort*,
 An argument of cogence, we may say,
 Why such an one should keep himself a bay,
 A graver cozecomb we may sometimes see
 Quite as absurd though not so light as he
 A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
 An oracle within an empty cask,
 The solemn fop; significant and badge,¹
 A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge,
 He says but little, and that little said
 Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead
 His wit invites you by his looks to come,
 But when you knock it never is at home
 'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,
 Some handsome present, as your hopes presage,
 'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
 An absent friend's fidelity and love,
 But when unpack'd, your disappointment groans
 To find it stuff'd with brickbats, earth, and stones

Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,
 In making known how oft they have been sick,
 And give us in recitals of disease
 A doctor's trouble, but without the fees
 Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
 How an emetic or cathartic sped,
 Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,
 Nose, ears and eyes seem present on the spot
 Now the distemper spite of draught or pill
 Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill;
 And now—alas for unforeseen mishaps!
 They put on a damp nightcap, and relapse,
 They thought they must have died they were so bad,
 Their physicians hezzer almost with they had
 Some fretful tempera vince at every touch,
 You always do too little, or too much

¹ Lighd, or amere, so Milton speaks of—

"—these badge doctors of the stole far"

COWPER

You speak with life in hopes to entertain,
 Your elevated voice goes through the brain,
 You fall at once into a lower key,
 That s worse—the drone pipe of a humble bee
 The southern sash admits too strong a light
 You rise and drop the curtain—now it's night
 He shakes with cold—you stir the fire and strive
 To make a blaze—that's roasting him alive
 Serve him with venison and he chooses fish,
 With cold—that's just the sort he would not wish
 He takes what he at first profess'd to loathe,
 And in due time feeds heartily on both,
 Yet still o'erclouded with a constant frown,
 He does not swallow but he gulps it down,
 Your hope to please him, vain on ev'ry plan,
 Himself should work that wonder if he can—
 Alas! his efforts double his distress,
 He likes yours little, and his own still less,
 Thus always teasing others, always teased,
 His only pleasure is—to be displeased!
 I pity bashful men who feel the pain
 Of fancied scorn and undeserved disdain,
 And bear the marks upon a blushing face
 Of needless shame and self imposed disgrace
 Our sensibilities are so acute,
 The fear of being silent makes us mute
 We sometimes think we could a speech produce
 Much to the purpose, if our tongues were loose,
 But being tied, it dies upon the lip,
 Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip
 Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,
 Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral urns
 Few Frenchmen of this evil have complain'd,
 It seems as if we Britons were ordain'd,
 By way of wholesome curb upon our pride,
 To fear each other, fearing none beside
 The cause perhaps inquiry may desery,
 Self searching with an unsuspected eye,
 Conceal'd within an unsuspected part,
 The vainest corner of our own vain heart
 For ever aiming at the world's esteem,
 Our self importance ruins its own scheme,

He paints the ludicrous characters of common life with the comic force
 of Molière particularly in his exquisite portrait of a fretful temper—a
 piece of moral painting highly finished, and happily calculated to promote
 good humour —HAYLEY

In other eyes our talents, rarely shown,
 Become at length so splendid in our own,
 We dare not risk them into public view,
 Lest they miscarry of what seems then due
 True modesty is a discerning grace,
 And only blishes in the proper place,
 But counterfeit is blind, and skulks through tea.
 Where 'tis a shame to be ashamed t'appen,
 Humility the parent of the first,
 The last by vanity produced and nursed
 The circle form'd we sit in silent state,
 Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate,
 Yes, ma'am, and no, ma'am utter'd softly, show
 Ev'ry five minutes how the minutes go,
 Each individual suffering a constraint
 Poetry may, but colours cannot paint,
 As if in close committee on the sky,
 Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry,
 And finds a changing clime a happy source
 Of wise reflection and well-tuned discourse

We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,
 Like conservators of the public health,
 Of epidemic throats if such there are,
 And coughs and rheums and phthisic and catarrh
 That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,
 Fill'd up at last with interesting news,
 Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed
 And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed,
 But fear to call a more important cause,
 As if 'twere treason against English laws
 The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,
 As from a seven years' transportation, home,
 And there resume an unembarrass'd brow,
 Recov'ring what we lost we know not how,
 The faculties that seem'd reduced to nought,
 Expression and the privilege of thought

The reeking, roaring hero of the chase,
 I give him over as a desp'rate case
 Physicians write in hopes to work a cure,
 Never, if honest ones, when death is sure,
 And though the fox he follows may be tamed,
 A mere fox-follower never is reclaim'd
 Some farmer should prescribe his proper course
 Whose only fit companion is his horse,
 Or if, deserving of a better doom
 The noble beast judge otherwise, his groom

Yet er'n the rogue that serves him, though he
stand

To take his honour & orders cap in hand,
Prefers his fellow-grooms with much good sense,
Their skill a truth his master's a pretence
If neither horse nor groom affect the 'squire,
Where can at last his jockeyship retire?
Oh to the club, the scene of savage joys
The school of coarse good fellowship and noise,
There in the sweet society of those
Whose friendship from his boyish years he chose,
Let him improve his talent if he can,
Till none but beasts acknowledge him a man

Man's heart had been impenetrably seal'd,
Like theirs that cleave the flood, or graze the field,
Had not his Maker's all bestowing hand
Giv'n him a soul and bade him understand.
The reas'ning pow'r, vouchsafed, of course inferr'd
The pow'r to clothe that reason with his word,
For all is perfect that God works on earth,
And he that gives conception, adds the birth
If this be plain 'tis plainly understood
What uses of his boon the Giver would.
The mind despatched upon her busy toil
Should range where Providence has blest the soil,
Visiting ev'ry flow'r with labour meet,
And gathering all her treasures sweet by sweet,
She should imbue the tongue with what she sips,
And shed the balmy blessing on the lips,
That good diffused may more abundant grow,
And speech may praise the pow'r that bids it flow
Will the sweet warbler of the livelong night,
That fills the list'ning lover with delight,
Forget his harmony with rapture heard,
To learn the trill'ring of a meaner bird,
Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,
That odious libel on a human voice?
No—nature, unsophisticate by man,
Starts not aside from her Creator's plan,
The melody that was at first design'd
To cheer the rude forefathers of mankind,
Is note for note deliver'd in our ears,
In the last scene of her six thousand years
Yet Fashion, leader of a chatt'ring tram,
Whom man for his own hurt permits to regn,

Who shifts and changes all things but her shape,
 And would degrade her vot'ry to an ape,
 The fruitful parent of abuse and wrong,
 Holds an usurp'd dominion o'er his tongue
 There sits and prompts him with his own disgrace,
 Prescribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,
 And, when accomplish'd in her wayward school,
 Calls gentleman whom she has made a fool
 'Tis an unalterable fix'd decree
 That none could frame, or ratify, but she,
 That heav'n, and hell, and righteousness, and sin,
 Snares in his path, and foes that lurk within,
 God and his attributes (a field of day
 Where 'tis an angel's happiness to stray),
 Fruits of his love and wonders of his might,
 Be never named in ears esteem'd polite
 That he who dares, when she forbids, be grave,
 Shall stand proscribed, a madman or a knave,
 A close designer not to be believed,
 Or if excused that charge, at least deceived
 Oh folly worthy of the nurse's lap,
 Give it the breast, or stop its mouth with pap!
 Is it incredible, or can it seem
 A dream to any except those that dream,
 That man should love his Maker, and *that* fire
 Warming his heart should at his lips transpire?
 Know then, and modestly let fall your eyes,
 And vail your daring crest that braves the skies
 That air of insolence affronts your God,
 You need his pardon, and provoke his rod
 Now, in a posture that becomes you more
 Than that heroic strut assumed before,
 Know, your arrears with ev'ry hour accrue
 For mercy shown while wrath is justly due
 The time is short, and there are souls on earth,
 Though future pain may serve for present mirth,
 Acquainted with the woes that fear or shame,
 By fashion taught, forbade them once to name,
 And having felt the pangs you deem a jest,
 Have proved them truths too big to be express'd
 Go seek on revelation's hallow'd ground,
 Sure to succeed, the remedy they found,
 Touch'd by that pow'r that you have dared to
 mock,
 That makes seas stable and dissolves the rock.

Your heart shall yield a life renewing stream,
That fools, as you have done, shall call a dream

It happen'd on a solemn even-tide,¹
Soon after He that was our surety di'd,
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied as they went
In musings worthy of the great event
They spake of him they loved, of him whose life
Though blameless had incur'd perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts,
The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther traced enrich'd them still the more,
They thought him, and they justly thought him one
Sent to do more than he appear'd t' have done,
T' exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else, and wonder'd he should die
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,
And ask'd them, with a kind engaging air,
What their affliction was, and begg'd a share
Inform'd, he gather'd up the broken thread,
And truth and wisdom gracing all he said,
Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well,
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That reaching home, The night, they said, is near,
We must not now be parted, sojourn here —
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And made so welcome at their simple feast,
He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all he deign'd to say,
Did they not burn within us by the way?

Now theirs was converse such as it behoves
Man to maintain, and such as God approves;
Their views, indeed, were indistinct and dim,
But yet successful, being aim'd at him
Christ and his character their only scope,
Their object and their subject and their hope,
They felt what it became them much to feel,
And, wanting him to loose the sacred seal,

¹ "And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs, and they talked together of all these things which had happened." — St. Luke xxiv 13 14.

Found him as prompt¹ as their desire was true,
 To spread the new-born glories in their view
 Well, what are ages and the lapse of time
 Match'd against truths as lasting as sublime?
 Can length of years on God himself exact,
 Or make that fiction which was once a fact?
 No—marble and recording brass decay,
 And like the graver's mem'ry pass away,
 The works of man inherit, as is just,
 Their author's frailty and return to dust;
 But truth divine for ever stands secure,
 Its head as guarded as its base is sure,
 Fixt in the rolling flood of endless years,
 The pillar of th' eternal plan appears,
 The raving storm and dashing wave defies,
 Built by that Architect who built the skies
 Hearts may be found that harbour, at this hour,
 That love of Christ in all its quick'ning pow'r,
 And lips unstain'd by folly or by strife,
 Whoso wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,
 Tastes of its healthful origin, and flows
 A Jordan for th' ablution of our woes
 Oh days of heav'n and nights of equal praise,
 Serene and peaceful as those heav'nly days,
 When souls drawn upward in communion sweet,
 Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat,
 Discourse, as if released and safe at home,
 Of dangers past and wonders yet to come,
 And spread the sacred treasures of the breast
 Upon the lap of covenanted rest

What, always dreaming over heav'nly things,
 Like angel-heads in stone, with pigeon-wings?
 Canting and whining out all day the word,
 And half the night? fanatic and absurd!
 Mine be the friend less frequent in his pray'rs,
 Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,
 Whose wit can brighten up a wintry day,
 And chase the splenetic dull hours away,
 Content on earth in earthly things to shine,
 Who waits for heav'n e'er he becomes divine,
 Leaves saints t'enjoy those altitudes they teach,
 And plucks the fruit placed more within his reach.

¹ "And it came to pass, that, while they communed together, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them." —St Luke xxiv.
 15

COWPER

Well spoken, advocate of sin and shame,
 Known by thy bleating, Ignorance thy name,
 Is sparkling wit the world's exclusive right,
 The first fee simple of the vain and light?
 Can hopes of heav'n, bright prospects of an hour,
 That come to waft us out of sorrow's pow'r,
 Obscure or quench a faculty that finds
 Its happiest soul in the sereneest minds?
 Religion curbs indeed its wanton play,
 And brings the trifler under rig'rous sway,
 But gives it usefulness unknown before,
 And purifying makes it shine the more
 A Christian's wit is inoffensive light,
 A beam that aids but never grieves the sight,
 Vig'rous in age as in the flush of youth,
 'Tis always active on the side of truth,
 Temp'rance and peace ensure its healthful state,
 And make it brightest at its latest date
 Oh I have seen (nor hope perhaps in vain
 Ere life go down to see such sights again)
 A vet'ran warrior in the Christian field,
 Who never saw the sword he could not wield,
 Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
 Exact yet not precise, though meek, keen eyed,
 A man that would have soiled at their own play,
 A dozen would be's of the modern day
 Who, when occasion justified its use,
 Had wit as bright as ready, to produce,
 Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
 Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page
 His rich materials, and regale your ear
 With strains it was a privilege to hear,
 Yet above all his luxury supreme,
 And his chief glory was the Gospel theme,
 There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
 His happy eloquence seem'd there at home,
 Ambitious, not to shine or to excel,
 But to treat justly what he loved so well
 It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,
 When some green heads, as void of wit as thought,
 Suppose *themselves* monopolists of sense,
 And wiser men's ability pretence
 Though time will wear us, and we must grow old,
 Such men are not forgot as soon as cold,
 Their fragrant mem'ry will outlast their tomb,
 Embalm'd for ever in its own perfume

And to say truth, though in its early prime,
 And when unstain'd with any grosser crime,
 Youth has a sprightliness and fire to boast,
 That in the valley of decline are lost,
 And virtue with peculiar charms appears,
 Crown'd with the garland of life's blooming years,
 Yet age by long experience well inform'd,
 Well read, well temper'd, with religion warm'd,
 That fire abated which impels rash youth,
 Proud of his speed to overshoot the truth,
 As time improves the grape's authentic juice,
 Mellow and makes the speech more fit for use
 And claims a reverence in its short'ning day,
 That 'tis an honour and a joy to pay
 The fruits of age, less fair, are yet more sound,
 Than those a brighter season pours around,
 And, like the stores autumnal suns mature,
 Through wintry rigours unimpair'd endure

What is fanatic frenzy, scorn'd so much,
 And dreaded more than a contagious touch?
 I grant it dang'rous, and approve your fear,
 That fire is catching if you draw too near,
 But sage observers oft mistake the flame,
 And give true piety that odious name
 To tremble (as the creature of an hour
 Ought at the view of an almighty pow'r)
 Before His presence, at whose awful throne
 All tremble in all worlds, except our own,
 To supplicate his mercy, love his ways,
 And prize them above pleasure, wealth, or praise,
 Though common sense allow'd a casting voice,
 And free from bias, must approve the choice,
 Convicts a man fanatic in the extreme,
 And wild as madness in the world's esteem
 But that disease when soberly defined
 Is the false fire of an o'erheated mind;
 It views the truth with a distorted eye,
 And either warps or lays it useless by,
 'Tis narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws
 Its sordid nourishment from man's applause,
 And, while at heart sin unrelinquish'd lies,
 Presumes itself chief fav'rite of the skies
 'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds
 In fly-blown flesh, whereon the maggot feed
 Shines in the dark, but usher'd into day,
 The stench remains, the lustre dies away.

True bliss, if man may reach it, is composed
 Of hearts in union mutually disclosed
 And, farewell else all hope of pure delight,
 Those hearts should be reclaim'd, renew'd, upright.
 Bad men, profaning friendship's hallow'd name,
 Form, in its stead, a covenant of shame,
 A dark confed'racy against the laws
 Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause.
 They build each other up with dreadful skill,
 As bastions set point-blank against God's will,
 Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,
 Deeply resolved to shut a Saviour out,
 Call legions up from hell to back the deed,
 And, cursed with conquest, finally succeed
 But souls that carry on a blest exchange
 Of joys they meet with in their heav'nly range,
 And with a fearless confidence make known
 The sorrows sympathy esteems its own,
 Daily derive increasing light and force
 From such communion in their pleasant course,
 Feel less the journey's roughness and its length,
 Meet their opposers with united strength,
 And one in heart, in int'rest, and design,
 Gird up each other to the race divine

But Conversation, choose what theme we may,
 And chiefly when religion leads the way,
 Should flow like waters after summer show'rs,
 Not as if raised by mere mechanic pow'rs
 The Christian, in whose soul though now distress'd,
 Loves the dear thought of joys he once possess'd,
 When all his glowing language issued forth
 With God's deep stamp upon its current worth,
 Will speak without disguise and must impart
 Sad as it is, his undissembling heart,
 Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal
 Or seem to boast a fire he does not feel
 The song of Sion is a tasteless thing,
 Unless when rising on a joyful wing
 The soul can mix with the celestial bands,
 And give the strain the compass it demands
 Strange tidings these to tell a world who treat
 All but their own experience as deceit!
 Will they believe, though credulous enough
 To swallow much upon much weaker proof,
 That there are blest inhabitants of earth,
 Partakers of a new ethereal birth,

Their hopes, desires, and purposes estranged
From things terrestrial, and divinely changed,
Their very language of a kind that speaks
The soul's sure int'rest in the good she seeks,
Who deal with Scripture, its importance felt,
As Tully with philosophy once dealt,
And in the silent watches of the night,
And through the scenes of toil-renewing light,
The social walk, or solitary ride,
Keep still the dear companion at their side?
No—shame upon a self-disgracing age,
God's work may serve an ape upon a stage
With such a jest, as fill'd with hellish glee
Certain invisibles as shrewd as he,
But veneration or respect finds none,
Save from the subjects of that work alone
The world, grown old, her deep discernment shows,
Claps spectacles on her sagacious nose,
Peruses closely the true Christian's face,
And finds it a mere mask of sly grimace,
Usurps God's office, lays his bosom bare,
And finds hypocrisy close-lurking there,
And, serving God herself through mere constraint,
Concludes his unfeign'd love of him, a feint.
And yet God knows, look human nature through,
(And in due time the world shall know it too,)
That since the flow'rs of Eden felt the blast,
That after man's defection laid all waste,
Sincerity towards th' heart-searching God,
Has made the new-born creature her abode,
Nor shall be found in unregen'rate souls,
Till the last fire burn all between the poles
Sincerity! Why 'tis his only pride,
Weak and imperfect in all grace beside,
He knows that God demands his heart entire,
And gives him all his just demands require
Without it, his pretensions were as vain
As, having it, he deems the world's disdain,
That great defect would cost him not alone
Man's favourable judgment, but his own,
His birthright shaken and no longer clear,
Than while his conduct proves his heart sincere
Retort the charge, and let the world be told
She boasts a confidence she does not hold,
That conscious of her crimes, she feels instead,
A cold misgiving, and a killing dread.

That while in health, the ground of her support
 Is madly to forget that life is short,
 That sick, she trembles, knowing she must die,
 Her hope presumption, and her faith a lie,
 That while she dotes and dreams that she believes,
 She mocks her Maker and herself deceives,
 Her utmost reach, historical assent,
 The doctrines warp't to what they never meant,
 That truth itself is in her head as dull
 And useless as a candle in a skull,
 And all her love of God a groundless claim,
 A trick upon the canvass, painted flame
 Tell her again, the sneer upon her face,
 And all her censures of the work of grace,
 Are insincere, meant only to conceal
 A dread she would not, yet is forced to feel.
 That in her heart the Christian she reveres,
 And, while she seems to scorn him, only fears

A poet does not work by square or line,
 As smiths and joiners perfect a design,
 At least we moderns, our attention less,
 Beyond th' example of our sires, digress,
 And claim a right to scamper and run wide,
 Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide
 The world and I fortuitously met,
 I owed a trifle and have paid the debt,
 She did me wrong, I recompensed the deed,
 And, having struck the balance, now proceed
 Perhaps, however, as some years have pass'd
 Since she and I conversed together last,
 And I have lived recluse in rural shades,
 Which seldom a distinct report pervades,
 Great changes and new manners have occur'd,
 And blest reforms that I have never heard,
 And she may now be as discreet and wise,
 As once absurd in all discerning eyes
 Sobriety perhaps may now be found,
 Where once intoxication press'd the ground,
 The subtle and injurious may be just,
 And he grown chaste that was the slave of lust,
 Arts once esteem'd may be with shame dismiss'd,
 Charity may relax the miser's fist,
 The gamester may have cast his cards away,
 Forgot to curse and only kneel to pray
 It has indeed been told me (with what weight,
 How credibly, 'tis hard for me to state)

That fables old, that seem'd for ever mute,
 Reviv'd are hast'ning into flesh and repute,
 And gods and goddesses discarded long,
 Like useless lumber or a stroller's song,
 Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,
 And Jupiter bids fair to rule again
 That certain feasts are instituted now,
 Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow,
 That all Olympus through the country roves,
 To consecrate our few remaining groves,
 And echo learns politely to repeat,
 The praise of names for ages obsolete;
 That having proved the weakness, it should seem
 Of revelation's inefficual beam,
 To bring the passions under sober sway,
 And give the moral springs their proper play,
 They mean to try what may at last be done
 By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,
 And whether Roman rites may not produce
 The virtues of old Rome for English use
 May much success attend the pious plan,
 May Mercury once more embellish man,
 Grace him again with long forgotten arts,
 Reclaim his taste and brighten up his parts,
 Make him athletic as in days of old,
 Learn'd at the bar, in the palastra bold,
 Drest the rougher sex of female airs,
 And teach the softer not to copy theirs
 The change shall please, nor shall it matter aught
 Who works the wonder if it be but wrought
 'Tis time, however if the case stands thus,
 For us plain folks and all who side with us,
 To build our altar, confident and bold,
 And say as stern Elijah said of old,
 The strife now stands upon a fair award,
 If Israel's Lord be God, then serve the Lord--
 If he be silent, faith is all a whim,
 Then Baal is the God, and worship him.¹

Digression is so much in modern use,
 Thought is so rare, and fancy so profuse,
 Some never seem so wide of their intent,
 As when returning to the theme they meant,
 As incendiaries whose business is to roam,
 Make ev'ry parish but their own, their home

Though such continual zigzags in a book,
 Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,
 And I had rather creep to what is true,
 Than rove and stagger with no mark in view,
 Yet to consult a little, seem'd no crime,
 The freakish humour of the present time
 But now, to gather up what seems dispersed,
 And touch the subject I design'd at first,
 May prove, though much beside the rules of art,
 Best for the public, and my wisest part
 And first, let no man charge me that I mean
 To clothe in sables every social scene,
 And give good company a face severe
 As if they met around a father's bier,
 For tell some men that pleasure all their bent,
 And laughter all their work, is life misspent,
 Their wisdom bursts into this sage reply,
 Then mirth is sin, and we should always cry.
 To find the medium asks some share of wit,
 And therefore 'tis a mark fools never hit.
 But though life's valley be a vale of tears,
 A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,
 Whose glory, with a light that never fades,
 Shoots between scatter'd rocks and opening
 shades,
 And, while it shows the land the soul desires,
 The language of the land she seeks, inspires
 Thus touch'd, the tongue receives a sacred cure
 Of all that was absurd, profane, impure,
 Held within modest bounds the tide of speech
 Pursues the course that truth and nature teach,
 No longer labours merely to produce
 The pomp of sound, or tinklo without use;
 Where'er it winds, the salutary stream
 Sprightly and fresh, enriches ev'ry theme,
 While all the happy man possess'd before,
 'The gift of nature, or the classic store,
 Is made subservient to the grand design
 For which Heav'n form'd the faculty divine
 So should an idiot, while at large he strays,
 Find the sweet lyre on which an artist plays,
 With rash and awkward force the chords he
 shakes,
 And grins with wonder at the jar he makes,
 But let the wise and well instructed hand
 Once take the shell beneath his just command

In gentle sounds it seems as it complain'd
 Of the rude injuries it late sustain'd,
 Till, tun'd at length to some immortal song,
 It sounds Jehovah's name, and pours his praise along.

RETIREMENT

——— *studiis florens ignobilis oti* —VIRG Geor Lib iv

HACKNEY'D in business, wearied at that oar
 Which thousands, once fast chain'd to, quit no more,
 But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,
 All wish, or seem to wish they could forego,
 The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,
 Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,
 Where, all his long anxieties forgot
 Amid the charms of a sequester'd spot,
 Or recollected only to gild o'er
 And add a smile to what was sweet before,
 He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,
 Lay his old age upon the lap of ease,
 Improve the remnant of his wasted span,
 And, having lived a trifler, die a man
 Thus conscience pleads her cause within the breast,
 Though long rebell'd against, not yet suppress'd,
 And calls a creature form'd for God alone,
 For Heaven's high purposes and not his own,
 Calls him away from selfish ends and aims,
 From what debilitates and what inflames,
 From cities humming with a restless crowd,
 Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,
 Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,
 The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain,
 Where works of man are cluster'd close around,
 And works of God are hardly to be found,
 To regions where, in spite of sin and woe,
 Traces of Eden are still seen below,
 Where mountain, river, forest, field, and grove,
 Remind him of his Maker's pow'r and love
 'Tis well if look'd for at so late a day,
 In the last scene of such a senseless play,
 True wisdom will attend his feeble call,
 And grace his action ere the curtain fall
 Souls that have long despised their heav'nly birth,
 Their wishes all impregnated with earth.

For threescore years, employ'd with ceaseless care
 In catching smoke and feeding upon air,
 Conversant only with the ways of men,
 Rarely redeem the short remaining ten.
 Invetrate habits choke th' unfruitful heart,
 Their fibres penetrate its tend'rest part,
 And, draining its nutritious pow'rs to seed
 Their noxious growth, starve ev'ry better seed

Happy if full of days—but happier far
 If, ere we yet discern life's evening star,
 Sick of the service of a world that feeds
 Its patient drudges with dry chaff and weeds
 We can escape from custom's idiot sway,
 To serve the Sov'reign we were born to obey
 Then sweet to muse upon his skill display'd
 (Infinite skill) in all that he has made
 To trace in nature's most minute design,
 The signature and stamp of pow'r divine,
 Contrivance intricate express'd with ease,
 Where unassisted sight no beauty sees,
 The shapely limb and lubricated joint,
 Within the small dimensions of a point,
 Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,
 His mighty work who speaks and it is done,
 Th' invisible in things scarce seen reveal'd,
 To whom an atom is an ample field
 To wonder at a thousand insect forms,
 These hatch'd, and those resuscitated worms,
 New life ordain'd and brighter scenes to share,
 Once prone on earth, now buoyant upon air,
 Whose shape would make them, had they bulk and size,
 More hideous foes than fancy can devise,
 With helmed head and dragon scales adorn'd,
 The mighty myriads, now securely scorn'd
 Would mock the majesty of man's high birth,
 Despise his bulwarks, and unpeople earth
 Then with a glance of fancy to survey,
 Far as the faculty can stretch away,
 Ten thousand rivers pour'd at his command
 From urns that never fail, through ev'ry land,
 These, like a deluge, with impetuous force,
 Those winding modestly a silent course,
 The cloud surmounting Alps, the fruitful vales,
 Seas on which ev'ry nation spreads her sails,
 The sun, a world whence other worlds drink light,
 The crescent moon the diadem of night,

Stars countless, each in his appointed place,
 Fast anchor'd in the deep abyss of space—
 At such a sight to catch the poet's flame,
 And with a rapture like his own exclaim,
 These are thy glomous works, thou Source of good,
 How dimly seen, how faintly understood !—
 Thine, and upheld by thy paternal care,
 This universal frame, thus wond'rous fair,
 Thy pow'r divine, and bounty beyond thought,
 Adored and praised in all that thou hast wrought,
 Absorb'd in that immensity I see,
 I shrink abased, and yet aspire to thee,
 Instruct me, guide me to that heavenly day,
 Thy words, more clearly than thy works display,
 That while thy truths my grosser thoughts refine,
 I may resemble thee and call thee mine

Oh blest proficiency ! surpassing all
 That men erroneously their glory call,
 The recompence that arts or arms can yield,
 The bar, the senate, or the tented field
 Compared with this sublimest life below,
 Ye kings and rulers what have courts to show ?
 Thus studied, used, and consecrated thus,
 Whatever is, seems form'd indeed for us,
 Not as the plaything of a froward child,
 Fretful unless diverted and beguiled,
 Much less to feed and fan the fatal fires
 Of pride, ambition, or impure desires,
 But as a scale, by which the soul ascends
 From mighty means to more important ends,
 Securely, though by steps but rarely trod,
 Mounts from inferior beings up to God,
 And sees by no fallacious light or dim,
 Earth made for man, and man himself for him

Not that I mean t' approve, or would enforce
 A superstitious and monastic course
 'Truth is not local,¹ God alike pervades
 And fills the world of traffic and the shades,
 And may be fear'd amid the busiest scenes,
 Or scorn'd where business never intervenes •
 But 'tis not easy with a mind like ours,
 Conscious of weakness in its noblest pow'rs,

- There can be no doubt in the remark of his kinsman, Mr. Johnson, that had his mind been the repository of less exquisitely tender sensibilities, he would have returned to his duties in the Inner Temple

And in a world where (other ills apart)
 The roving eye misleads the careless heart,
 To limit thought, by nature prone to stray
 Wherever freakish fancy points the way,
 To bid the pleadings of self-love be still,
 Resign our own, and seek our Maker's will,
 To spread the page of Scripture, and compare
 Our conduct with the laws engraven there,
 To measure all that passes in the breast,
 Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test,
 To dive into the secret deeps within,
 To spare no passion and no fair rite sin,
 And search the themes important above all,
 Ourselves and our recovery from our fall
 But leisure, silence, and a mind released
 From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increased
 How to secure in some propitious hour,
 The point of rest, or the post of power,
 A soul serene, and equally retired,
 From objects too much dreaded, or desired,
 Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,
 At least are friendly to the great pursuit
 Op'ning the map of God's extensive plan,
 We find a little isle, this life of man,
 Eternity's unknown expanse appears
 Circling around and limiting his years,
 The busy race examine and explore
 Each creek and cavern of the dang'rous shore,
 With care collect what in their eyes excels,
 Some, shining pebbles, and some, weeds and shells;
 Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,
 And happiest he that groans beneath his weight,
 The waves o'er take them in their serious play,
 And every hour sweeps multitudes away,
 They shriek and sink, survivors start and weep,
 Pursue their sport, and follow to the deep,
 A few forsake the throng, with lifted eyes
 Ask wealth of Heav'n, and gain a real prize,
 Truth, wisdom, grace, and peace like that above,
 Seal'd with His signet whom they serve and love,
 Scorn'd by the rest, with patient hope they wait
 A kind release from their imperfect state,
 And, unregretted, are soon snatch'd away
 From scenes of sorrow into glorious day
 Nor these alone prefer a life recluse,
 Who seek retirement for its proper use.

The love of change that lives in every breast,
 Genius, and temper, and desire of rest,
 Discordant motives in one centre meet,
 And each inclines its vot'ry to retreat
 Some minds by nature are averse to noise,
 And hate the tumult half the world enjoys,
 The lure of av'nee, or the pompous prize,
 That courts display before ambitious eyes,
 The fruits that hang on pleasure's flow'ry stem,
 Whate'er enchants them are no snares to them.
 To them the deep recess of dusky groves,
 Or forest where the deer securely roves,
 The fall of waters and the song of birds,
 And hills that echo to the distant herds,
 Are luxuries excelling all the glare
 The world can boast, and her chief fav'rites share.
 With eager step and carelessly array'd,
 For such a cause the poet seeks the shade,
 From all he sees he catches new delight,
 Pleased fancy claps her pinions at the sight,—
 The rising or the setting orb of day,
 The clouds that flit, or slowly float away,
 Nature in all the various shapes she wears,
 Frowning in storms, or breathing gentle airs,
 The snowy robe her wintry state assumes,
 Her summer heats, her fruits, and her perfumes,
 All, all alike transport the glowing bard,
 Success in rhyme his glory and reward
 Oh nature! whose Elysian scenes disclose
 His bright perfections at whose word they rose,
 Next to that Pow'r who form'd thee and sustains,
 Be thou the great inspirer of my strains,
 Still as I touch the lyre do thou expand
 Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand,
 That I may catch a fire but rarely known,
 Give useful light though I should miss renown,
 And, poring on thy page whose every line
 Bears proofs of an intelligence divine,
 May feel a heart enrich'd by what it pays,
 That builds its glory on its Maker's praise
 Woe to the man whose wit disclaims its use.
 Glitt'ring in vain, or only to seduce,
 Who studies nature with a wanton eye,
 Admires the work, but slips the lesson by,
 His hours of leisure and recess employs,
 In drawing pictures of forbidden joys,

Retires to blazon his own worthless name,
 Or shoot the careless with a surer aim
 The lover too shuns business and alarms,
 Tender idolater of absent charms,
 Saints offer nothing in their warmest prayers,
 That he devotes not with a zeal like theirs,
 'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,
 And every thought that wanders is a crime.
 In sighs he worships his supremely fair,
 And weeps a sad libation in despair,
 Adores a creature, and, devout in vain,
 Wins in return an answer of disdain.
 As woodbine weds the plants within her reach,
 Rough elm, or smooth grain'd ash, or glossy beech,
 In spiral rings ascends the trunk, and lays
 Her golden tassels on the leafy sprays,
 But does a mischief while she lends a grace,
 Strait'ning its growth by such a strict embrace
 So love, that clings around the noblest minds,
 Forbids th' advancement of the soul he binds,
 The suitor's air indeed he soon improves,
 And forms it to the taste of her he loves,
 Teaches his eyes a language, and no less
 Refines his speech and fashions his address,
 But farewell promises of happier fruits,
 Manly designs, and learning's grave pursuits,
 Girt with a chain he cannot wish to break,
 His only bliss is sorrow for her sake,
 Who will may pant for glory and excel,
 Her smile his aim, all higher aims farewell!
 Thyrsis, Alexis, or whatever name
 May least offend against so pure a flame,
 Though sago advice of friends the most sincere
 Sounds harshly in so delicate an ear,
 And lovers of all creatures, tame or wild,
 Can least brook management, however mild,
 Yet let a poet (poetry disarms
 The fiercest animals with magic charms)
 Risk an intrusion on thy pensive mood,
 And woo and win thee to thy proper good.
 Pastoral images and still retreats,
 Umbrageous walks and solitary seats,
 Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,
 Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day dreams,
 Are all enchantments in a case like thine,
 Conspire against thy peace with one design,

Soothe thee to make thee but a surer prey,
 And feed the fire that wastes thy pow'rs away.
 Up—God has formed thee with a wiser view,
 Not to be led in chains, but to subdue,
 Calls thee to cope with enemies, and first
 Points out a conflict with thyself, the worst.
 Woman indeed, a gift he would bestow
 When he design'd a paradise below,
 The richest earthly boon his hands afford,
 Deserves to be beloved, but not adored
 Post away swiftly to more active scenes,
 Collect the scatter'd truths that study gleans,
 Mix with the world, but with its wiser part,
 No longer give an image all thine heart,
 Its empire is not hers, nor is it thine,
 'Tis God's just claim, prerogative divine

Virtuous and faithful *HEBERDEN*! whose skill
 Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,
 Gives melancholy up to nature's care,
 And sends the patient into purer air
 Look where he comes—in this embower'd alcove,
 Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move
 Lips busy, and eyes fixt, foot falling slow,
 Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below,
 Interpret to the marking eye, distress
 Such as its symptoms can alone express
 That tongue is silent now, that silent tongue
 Could argue once, could jest, or join the song,
 Could give advice, could censure, or commend,
 Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend.
 Renounced alike its office and its sport,
 Its brisker and its graver strains full short,
 Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,
 And like a summer-brook are past away.
 This is a sight for pity to peruse
 Till she resemble faintly what she views,
 Till sympathy contract a kindred pain,
 Pierced with the woes that she laments in vain
 This of all maladies that man infest,
 Claims most compassion and receives the least,
 Job felt it when he groan'd beneath the rod,
 And the barb'd arrows of a frowning God,

¹ It was of him that Johnson, being asked, in his fatal sickness what physician he had sent for, replied,—“Dr. Heberden, *illius Romanorum*, the last of our learned physicians.” Churchill had already given him a niche in “Gotham, b. ii. :—

“Phyric, obtaining succour from the pen
 Of her soft son the gentle Heberden.

And such emollients as his friends could spare,
 Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare
 Blest (rather curst) with hearts that never feel,
 Kept snug in caskets of close-hammer'd steel,
 With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,
 And minds that deem derided pain a treat,
 With limbs of British oak and nerves of wire,
 And wit that puppet-prompters might inspire,
 Their sov'reign nostrum is a clumsy joke,
 On pangs enforced with God's severest stroke
 But with a soul that ever felt the sting
 Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing,
 Not to molest, or irritate, or raise
 A laugh at its expense, is slender praise,
 He that has not usurp'd the name of man,
 Does all, and deems too little, all he can,
 T' assuage the throbbings of a broken heart,
 And stanch the bleedings of a sealer'd part,
 'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,
 Forgery of fancy and a dream of woes,
 Man is a harp whose chords elude the sight,
 Each yielding harmony, disposed aright,
 The screws reversed (a task which if he please
 God in a moment executes with ease)
 Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,
 Lost, till he tune them, all their pow'r and use
 Then neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair
 As ever recompensed the peasant's care,
 Nor soft declivities with tufted hills,
 Nor view of waters turning busy mills,
 Parks in which art preceptress nature weds,
 Nor gardens interspersed with flow'ry beds,
 Nor gales that catch the scent of blooming groves,
 And waft it to the mourner as he roves,
 Can call up life into his faded eye,
 That passes all he sees unheeded by
 No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels,
 No cure for such, till God, who makes them, heals.
 And thou, sad sufferer under nameless ill
 That yields not to the touch of human skill,
 Improve the kind occasion, understand
 A father's frown, and kiss his chast'ning hand
 To thee the day spring and the blaze of noon,
 The purple evening and resplendent moon,
 The stars, that, sprinkled o'er the vault of night
 Seem drops descending in a show'r of light,

Shine not, or undesired and hated shine,
 Seen through the medium of a cloud like thine;
 Yet seek him, in his favour life is found,
 All bliss beside, a shadow or a sound
 Then heav'n, eclipsed so long, and this dull earth
 Shall seem to start into a second birth,
 Nature assuming a more lovely face,
 Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,
 Shall be despised and overlook'd no more,
 Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,
 Impart to things inanimate a voice,
 And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice,
 The sound shall run along the winding vales,
 And thou enjoy an Eden ere it fails

Ye groves, (the statesman at his desk exclaims
 Sick of a thousand disappointed aims)
 My patrimonial treasure and my pride,
 Beneath your shades your gray possessor hide,
 Receive me languishing for that repose
 The servant of the public never knows
 Ye saw me once (ah, those regretted days,
 When boyish innocence was all my praise)
 Hour after hour delightfully allot
 To studies then familiar, since forgot,
 And cultivate a taste for ancient song,
 Catching its ardour as I mused along,
 Nor seldom, as propitious Heav'n might send,
 What once I valued and could boast, a friend,
 Were witnesses how cordially I press'd
 His undissembling virtue to my breast,
 Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,
 Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,
 But versed in arts that, while they seem to stay
 A fallen empire, hasten its decay
 To the fair haven of my native home,
 The wreck of what I was, fatigued I come,
 For once I can approve the patriot's voice,
 And make the course he recommends, my choice,
 We meet at last in one sincere desire,
 His wish and mine both prompt me to retire.
 'Tis done,—he steps into the welcome chaise,
 Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,
 That whirl away from bus'ness and debate,
 The disencumber'd Atlas of the state.
 Ask not the boy, who, when the breeze of morn
 First shakes the glittering drops from ev'ry thorn.

COWPER

Unfolds his flock, then under bank or bush
 Sits linking cherry-stones, or plating rush,
 How fair is freedom?—he was always free—
 To carve his rustic name upon a tree,
 To snare the mole, or with ill-fashion'd hook
 To draw th' incautious minnow from the brook,
 Are life's prime pleasures in his simple view,
 His flock tho' chief concern ho ever knew
 She shines but little in his heedless eyes,
 The good we never miss, wo rarely prize
 But ask the noble drudge in state affairs,
 Escaped from office and its constant cares,
 What charms he sees in freedom's smile express'd,
 In freedom lost so long, now repossess'd,
 The tongue whose strains were cogent as commands,
 Revered at home, and felt in foreign lands,
 Shall own itself a stamm'rer in that cause,
 Or plead its silence as its best applause
 He knows indeed that whether dress'd or rude,
 Wild without art, or artfully subdued,
 Nature in ev'ry form inspires delight,
 But never mark'd her with so just a sight
 Her hedge-row shrubs, a variegated store,
 With woodbine and wild roses mantled o'er,
 Green balks and furrow'd lands, the stream that
 spreads
 Its cooling vapour o'er the dewy meads,
 Downs that almost escape th' inquiring eye,
 That melt and fade into the distant sky,
 Beauties he lately slighted as ho pass'd,
 Seem all created since he travell'd last
 Master of all th' enjoyments he design'd,
 No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,
 What early philosophic hours he keeps,
 How regular his meals, how sound ho sleeps!
 Not sounder ho that on the mainmast head,
 While morning kindles with a windy red,
 Begins a long look-out for distant land,
 Nor quits till evening watch his giddy stand,
 Then, swift descending with a seaman's haste,
 Slips to his hammock, and forgets the blast.
 He chooses company, but not th' squire's,
 Whose wit is rudeness, whose good breeding
 tires,
 Nor yet the parson's who would gladly come
 Obsequious when abroad, though proud at home.

Nor can he much affect the neighb'ring peer,
 Whose toe of emulation treads too near,
 But wisely seeks a more convenient friend,
 With whom, dismissing forms, he may unbend,
 A man whom marks of condescending grace
 Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place,
 Who comes when call'd, and at a word withdraws
 Speaks with reserve, and listens with applause
 Some plain mechanic, who without pretence
 To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence,
 On whom he rests well pleased his weary pow'rs,
 And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.
 The tide of life, swift always in its course,
 May run in cities with a brisker force,
 But nowhere with a current so serene,
 Or half so clear, as in the rural scene
 Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss,
 What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss !
 Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,
 But short the date of all we gather here,
 No happiness is felt, except the true,
 That does not charm the more f'r being new
 Thus observation, as it chanced, not made,
 Or, if the thought occur'd, not duly weigh'd,
 He sighs—for after all, by slow degrees,
 The spot he loved has lost the pow'r to please,
 To cross his ambling pony day by day,
 Seems at the best, but dreaming life away,
 The prospect, such as might enchant despair,
 He views it not, or sees no beauty there,
 With aching heart and discontented looks,
 Returns at noon, to billiards, or to books,
 But feels, while grasping at his faded joys,
 A secret thirst of his renounced employs,
 Ho chides the tardiness of every post,
 Pants to be told of battles won, or lost,
 Blames his own indolence, observes, though late,
 'Tis criminal to leave a sinking state,
 Flies to the lovee, and, received with grace,
 Kneels, kisses hands, and shines again in place
 Suburban villas, highway side retreats,
 That dread th' encroachment of our growing streets,
 Tight boxes, neatly sash'd, and in a blaze,
 With all a July sun's collected rays,
 Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,
 Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.

COWPER

Oh, sweet Retirement, who would balk the thought,
 That could afford retirement, or could not?
 'Tis such an easy walk, so smooth and straight,
 The second milestone fronts the garden gate,
 A step if fair, and if a show'r approach,
 You find safe shelter in the next stage-coach.
 There prison'd in a parlour snug and small,
 Like bottled wasps upon a southern wall,
 The man of bus'ness and his friends compress'd,
 Forget their labours, and yet find no rest,
 But still 'tis rural—trees are to be seen
 From ev'ry window, and the fields are green,
 Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,
 And what could a remoter scene show more?
 A sense of elegance we rarely find
 The portion of a mean or vulgar mind,
 And ignorance of better things makes man,
 Who cannot much, rejoice in what he can,
 And he that deems his leisure well bestow'd
 In contemplations of a turnpike road,
 Is occupied as well, employs his hours
 As wisely, and as much improves his pow'rs,
 As he that slumbers in pavilions graced
 With all the charms of an accomplish'd taste
 Yet hence, alas! insolvencies, and hence
 Th' unpitied victim of ill judg'd expense,
 From all his wearisome engagements freed,
 Shakes hands with bus'ness, and retires indeed
 Your prudent grandmamas, ye modern belles,
 Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge-wells,
 When health required it would consent to roam,
 Else more attach'd to pleasures found at home;
 But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,
 Ingenious to diversify dull life,
 In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,
 Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,
 And all, impatient of dry land, agree
 With one consent to rush into the sea.—
 Ocean! exhibits, fathomless and broad,
 Much of the pow'r and majesty of God.

"I think with you, that the most magnificent object under heaven is the
 great deep. In all its various forms it is an object of all others the most
 suited to affect us with lasting impressions of the awful Power that created
 and controls it. At a time of life, when I gave as little attention to religious
 subjects as almost any man, I yet remember that the waves could preach to
 me, and that in the midst of dissipation I had an ear to hear them. One of
 Shakespeare's characters says—'I am never merry when I hear sweet music.'"
 —

He swathes about the swelling of the deep,
 That shines and rests, as infants smile and sleep
 Vast as it is, it answers as it flows
 The breathings of the lightest air that blows,
 Curling and whit'ning over all the waste,
 The rising waves obey th' increasing blast,
 Abrupt and horrid as the tempest roars,
 Thunder and flash upon the steadfast shores,
 'Till he, that rides the whirlwind, checks the rein,
 Then, all the world of waters sleeps again —
 Nereids or Dryads, as the fashion leads,
 Now in the floods, now panting in the meads,
 Vot'ries of pleasure still, where'er she dwells,
 Near barren rocks, in palaces, or cells,
 Oh grant a poet leave to recommend
 (A poet fond of nature and your friend)
 Her slighted works to your admiring view,
 Her works must needs excel, who fashion'd you.
 Would ye, when rambling in your morning ride
 With some unmeaning coxcomb at your side,
 Condemn the prattler for his idle pains,
 To waste unheard the music of his strains,
 And deaf to all th' impertinence of tongue,
 That while it courts, affronts and does you wrong,—
 Mark well the finish'd plan without a fault,
 The seas globose and huge, th' o'erarching vault,
 Earth's millions daily fed, a world employ'd
 In gath'ring plenty yet to be enjoy'd,
 Till gratitude grow vocal in the praise
 Of God, beneficent in all his ways
 Graced with such wisdom how would beauty shine?
 Ye want but that to seem indeed divine

Anticipated rents and bills unpaid
 Force many a shining youth into the shade
 Not to redeem his time, but his estate,
 And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate
 There hid in loathed obscurity, removed
 From pleasures left, but never more beloved,
 He just endures, and with a sickly spleen
 Sighs o'er the beauties of the charming scene
 Nature indeed looks prettily in rhyme,
 Streams tinkle sweetly in poetic chime,

The same effect that harmony seems to have had upon him, I have experienced from the sight and sound of the ocean, which have often composed my thoughts into a melancholy, not unpleasing, nor without its use "—(To Mr Unwin, Sept 28, 1781)

The warblings of the blackbird, clear and strong,
 Are musical enough in Thomson's song,¹
 And Cobham's groves and Windsor's green retreat
 When Pope describes them, have a thousand sweets
 He likes the country, but in truth must own,
 Most likes it, when he studies it in town,
 Poor Jack—no matter who—for when I blame
 I pity, and must therefore sink the name,
 Lived in his saddle, loved the chace, the course,
 And always, e'er he mounted, kiss'd his horse,
 Th' estate his sires had own'd in ancient years,
 Was quickly distanced, match'd against a peer's
 Jack vanish'd, was regretted and forgot,
 'Tis wild good nature's never-failing lot
 At length, when all had long supposed him dead,
 By cold submersion, razor, rope, or lead,
 My lord, alighting at his usual place,
 The Crown, took notice of an ostler's face
 Jack knew his friend, but hop'd in that disguise
 He might escape the most observing eyes,
 And whistling, as if unconcern'd and gay,
 Curried his nag and look'd another way,
 Convinced at last upon a nearer view,
 'Twas he, the same, the very Jack he knew,
 O'erwhelm'd at once with wonder, grief, and joy,
 He press'd him much to quit his base employ,—
 His countenance, his purse, his heart, his hand,
 Influence and pow'r were all at his command.
 Peers are not always gen'rous as well-bred,
 But Granby was, meant truly what he said.
 Jack bow'd and was oblig'd—confess'd 'twas strange
 That so retired he should not wish a change,
 But knew no medium between guzzling beer,
 And his old stint, three thousand pounds a year
 Thus some retire to nourish hopeless woe,
 Some seeking happiness not found below,
 To social scenes by nature disinclined,
 Some sway'd by fashion, some by deep disgust,
 Some self-impovertish'd, and because they must,
 But few that court Retirement are aware
 Of half the toils they must encounter there.
 Lucrative offices are seldom lost.
 For want of pow'rs proportion'd to the post

¹ "The blackbird whistles from the thorny brakes"—Spring 674.

² It was upon his own appointment to an office of this kind that he wrote to Lady Hesketh—"I am of a very angular temper, and very unlike all the men

Give ev'n a dunce th' employment he desires,
 And he soon finds the talents it requires,
 A business, with an income at its heels,
 Furnishes always oil for its own wheels
 But in his arduous enterprise to close
 His active years with indolent repose,
 He finds the labours of that state exceed
 His utmost faculties, severe indeed
 'Tis easy to resign a toilsome place,
 But not to manage leisure with a grace;
 Absence of occupation is not rest,
 A mind quite vacant is a mind distress'd
 The vet'ran steed, excused his task at length
 In kind compassion of his failing strength,
 And turn'd into the park or mead to graze,
 Exempt from future service all his days,
 There feels a pleasure perfect in its kind,
 Ranges at liberty, and snuffs the wind
 But when his lord would quit the busy road,
 To taste a joy like that he has bestow'd,
 He proves, less happy than his favour'd brute,
 A life of ease a difficult pursuit
 Thought, to the man that never thinks, may seem
 As natural, as when asleep to dream,
 But reveries (for human minds will act)
 Specious in show, impossible in fact,
 Those flimsy webs that break as soon as wrought,
 Attain not to the dignity of thought
 Nor yet the swarms that occupy the brain
 Where dreams of dress, intrigue, and pleasure reign,
 Nor such as useless conversation breeds,
 Or lust engenders, and indulgence feeds
 Whence, and what are we? to what end ordain'd?
 What means the drama by the world sustain'd?
 Business or vain amusement, care or mirth,
 Divide the frail inhabitants of earth,
 Is duty a mere sport, or an employ?
 Life an intrusted talent, or a toy?
 Is there, as reason, conscience, Scripture say,
 Cause to provide for a great future day,
 When, earth's assign'd duration at an end,
 Man shall be summon'd and the dead attend?
 The trumpet—will it sound? the curtain rise?
 And show th' august tribunal of the skies,

that I have ever conversed with. Certainly, I am not an absolute fool; but I have more weakness than the greatest of all the fools I can recollect at present."

Where no prevarication shall avail,
 Where eloquence and artifice shall fail,
 The pride of arrogant distinctions fall,
 And conscience and our conduct judge us all?
 Pardon me, ye that give the midnight oil
 To learned cares, or philosophic toil,
 Though I revere your honourable names,
 Your useful labours and important aims,
 And hold the world indebted to your aid,
 Enrich'd with the discoveries ye have made,
 Yet let me stand excused, if I esteem
 A mind employ'd on so sublime a theme,
 Pushing her bold inquiry to the date
 And outline of the present transient state,
 And, after poising her advent'rous wings,
 Setting at last upon eternal things,
 Far more intelligent, and better taught
 The strenuous use of profitable thought,
 Than ye, when happiest, and enlighten'd most,
 And highest in renown, can justly boast
 A mind unnerved, or indisposed to bear
 The weight of subjects worthiest of her care,
 Whatever hopes a change of scene inspires,
 Must change her nature, or in vain retires
 An idler is a watch that wants both hands,
 As useless if it goes, as when it stands
 Books therefore,—not the scandal of the shelves,
 In which lewd sensualists print out themselves,
 Nor those in which the stage gives vice a blow,
 With what success, let modern manners show,
 Nor his,¹ who for the bane of thousands born,
 Built God a church, and laugh'd his word to scorn,
 Skilful alike to seem devout and just,
 And stab religion with a sly side-thrust,
 Nor those of learn'd philologists, who chase
 A panting syllable through time and space,
 Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,
 To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark,—
 But such as learning without false pretence,
 The friend of truth, th' associate of sound sense,
 And such as in the zeal of good design,
 Strong judgment lab'ring in the Scripture mine,
 All such as manly and great souls produce,
 Worthy to live, and of eternal use,

¹ The allusion is to Voltaire

Behold in these what leisure hours demand,
 Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand
 Luxury gives the mind a childish cast,
 And, while she polishes, perverts the taste,
 Habits of close attention, thinking heads,
 Become more rare as dissipation spreads,
 Till authors hear at length one gen'ral cry,
 Tickle and entertain us, or we die
 The loud demand, from year to year the same,
 Beggars invention and makes fancy lame,
 Till farce itself, most mournfully jejune,
 Calls for the kind assistance of a tune,
 And novels (witness ev'ry month's review)
 Belie their name, and offer nothing new.
 The mind, relaxing into needful sport,
 Should turn to writers of an abler sort,
 Whose wit well managed, and whose classic style,
 Gives truth a lustre, and makes wisdom smile

Friends (for I cannot stint as some have done,
 Too rigid in my view, that name to one,
 Though one, I grant it, in th' gen'rous breast
 Will stand advanced a step above the rest,
 Flow'rs by that name promiscuously we call,
 But one, the rose, the regent of them all),
 Friends, not adopted with a schoolboy's haste,
 But chosen with a nice discerning taste,
 Well-born, well-disciplined, who, placed apart
 From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,
 And (though the world may think th' ingredients odd)
 The love of virtue, and the fear of God!
 Such friends prevent, what else would soon succeed,
 A temper rustic as the life we lead,
 And keep the polish of the manners clean,
 As theirs who bustle in the busiest scene
 For solitude, however some may rave,
 Seeming a sanctuary, proves a grave,
 A sepulchre in which the living lie,
 Where all good qualities grow sick and die
 I praise the Frenchman,¹ his remark was shrewd—
 How sweet, how passing sweet is solitude!
 But grant me still a friend in my retreat,
 Whom I may whisper,—Solitude is sweet²

¹ Bruyère — O

² "Though my life has long been like that of a recluse, I have not the temper of one, nor am I the least an enemy to cheerfulness and good humour" — (To Unwin, Oct 6, 1781.)

Yet neither these delights, nor aught beside,
 That appetite can ask, or wealth provide,
 Can save us always from a tedious day,
 Or shine the dulness of still life away,
 Divine communion carefully enjoy'd,
 Or sought with energy, must fill the void
 Its sacred art¹ to which alone life owes
 Its happiest seasons, and a peaceful close,
 Scorn'd in a world, indebted to that scorn
 For evils daily felt and hardly borne,
 Not knowing thee, we reap with bleeding hands
 Flow'rs of rank odour upon thorny lands,
 And, while experience cautions us in vain,
 Grasp seeming happiness, and find it pain.
 Despondence, self deserted in her grief,
 Lost by abandoning her own relief,
 Murmuring and ungrateful discontent,
 Those humours, tart as wines upon the fret,
 Which idleness and weariness beget,
 These and a thousand plagues that haunt the breast
 Fond of the phantom of an earthly rest,
 Divine communion chases, as the day
 Drives to their dens th' obedient beasts of prey
 See Judah's promised king,¹ bereft of all,
 Driven out an exile from the face of Saul,
 To distant caves the lonely wand'rer flies,
 To seek that peace a tyrant's frown denies
 Hear the sweet accents of his tuneful voice,
 Hear him o'erwhelm'd with sorrow, yet rejoice;
 No womanish or wailing grief has part,
 No, not a moment, in his royal heart,
 'Tis manly music, such as martyrs make,
 Suff'ring with gladness for a Saviour's sake,
 His soul exults, hope animates his lays,
 The sense of mercy kindles into praise,
 And wilds, familiar with the lion's roar,
 Ring with ecstatic sounds unheard before,
 'Tis love like his that can alone defeat
 The foes of man, or make a desert sweet
 Religion does not censure or exclude
 Unnumber'd pleasures, and with artful toil
 To study culture, and with artful toil
 To meliorate and tame the stubborn soul,

¹ David.

To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands
 The grain, or herb, or plant, that each demands,
 To cherish virtue in a humble state,
 And share the joys your bounty may create,
 To mark the matchless workings of the power
 That shuts within its seed the future flower,
 Bids these in elegance of form excel,
 In colour these, and those delight the smell,
 Sends Nature forth, the daughter of the skies,
 To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes,
 To teach the canvas innocent deceit,
 Or lay the landscape on the snowy sheet,—
 These, these are arts pursued without a crime,
 That leave no stain upon the wing of time

Me poetry (or rather notes that aim
 Feebly and vainly at poetic fame)
 Employs, shut out from more important views,
 Fast by the banks of the slow-winding Ouse,
 Content if, thus sequester'd I may raise
 A monitor's, though not a poet's praise,
 And while I teach an art, too little known,
 To close life wisely, may not waste my own

THE DOVES¹

REAS'NING at every step he treads,
 Man yet mistakes his way,
 While meaner things, whom instinct leads
 Are rarely known to stray

One silent eve I wander'd late,
 And heard the voice of love,
 The turtle thus address'd her mate,
 And sooth'd the list'ning dove

Our mutual bond of faith and truth,
 No time shall disengage,
 Those blessings of our early youth,
 Shall cheer our latest age

While innocence without disguise,
 And constancy sincere,
 Shall fill the circles of those eyes,
 And mine can read them there,

¹ The doves were Mr Newton and his wife

COWPER

Those ills that wait on all below,
 Shall ne'er be felt by me,
 Or gently felt, and only so,
 As being shared with thee

When lightnings flash among the trees,
 Or kites are hor'ring near,
 I fear lest thee alone they seize,
 And know no other fear

'Tis then I feel myself a wife,
 And press thy wedded side,
 Resolved an union form'd for life,
 Death never shall divide

But oh! if sickle and unchaste
 (Forgive a transient thought)
 Thou couldst become unkind at last,
 And scorn thy present lot,

No need of lightnings from on high,
 Or kites with cruel beak,
 Denied th' endearments of thine eye
 This widow'd heart would break

Thus sang the sweet sequester'd bird,
 Soft as the passing wind,
 And I recorded what I heard,
 A lesson for mankind.

A FABLE

A RAVEN, while with glossy breast
 Her new laid eggs she fondly press'd,
 And on her wicker-work high mounted
 Her chickens prematurely counted,
 (A fault philosopher might blame
 If quite exempted from the same,
 Enjoy'd at ease the genial day,
 'Twas April as the bunnies say,
 The legislature call'd it May
 But suddenly a wind, as high
 As ever swept a winter sky,
 Shook the young leaves about her ears,
 And fill'd her with a thousand fears,

Lest the rude blast should snap the bough,
 And spread her golden hopes below
 But just at eve the blowing weather
 And all her fears were hush'd together
 And now, quoth poor unthinking Raph,
 'Tis over, and the brood is safe,
 (For ravens, though as birds of omen
 They teach both conj'ers and old women
 To tell us what is to befall,
 Can't prophesy, themselves, at all,)
 'The morning came, when neighbour Hodge,
 Who long had mark'd her airy lodge,
 And destined all the treasure there
 A gift to his expecting fair,
 Climb'd like a squirrel to his dray,
 And bore the worthless prize away

MORAL

'Tis Providence alone secures
 In every change, both mine and yours
 Safety consists not in escape
 From dangers of a frightful shape,
 An earthquake may be bid to spare
 The man that's strangled by a hair
 Fate steals along with silent tread,
 Found oft'nest in what least we dread,
 Frowns in the storm with angry brow,
 But in the sunshine strikes the blow

A COMPARISON

THE lapse of time and rivers is the same,
 Both speed their journey with a restless stream,
 The silent pace with which they steal away,
 No wealth can bribe, no pray'rs persuade to stay,
 Alike irrevocable both when past,
 And a wide ocean swallows both at last
 Though each resemble each in ev'ry part,
 A difference strikes at length the musing heart,
 Streams never flow in vain, where streams abound,
 How laughs the land with various plenty crown'd!
 But time, that should enrich the nobler mind,
 Neglected, leaves a dreary waste behind.

ANOTHER

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY

SWEET stream that winds through yonder glade,
 Apt emblem of a virtuous maid,
 Silent and chaste she steals along,
 Far from the world's gay busy throng,
 With gentle yet prevailing force,
 Intent upon her destined course,
 Graceful and useful all she does,
 Blessing and blest where'er she goes,
 Pure bosom'd as that wat'ry glass,
 And heav'n reflected in her face

 VERSES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK, DURING HIS
 SOLITARY ABODE IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ

I AM monarch of all I survey,
 My right there is none to dispute,
 From the centre all round to the sea,
 I am lord of the fowl and the brute
 Oh solitude! where are the charms
 That sages have seen in thy face?
 Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
 Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
 I must finish my journey alone,
 Never hear the sweet music of speech,
 I start at the sound of my own
 The beasts, that roam over the plain,
 My form with indifference see,
 They are so unacquainted with man,
 Their tameness is shocking to me

Society, friendship, and love,
 Divinely bestow'd upon man—
 Oh had I the wings of a dove,
 How soon would I taste you again!

My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth

Religion ! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word !
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sigh'd at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a sabbath appear'd

Ye winds that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore,
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more
My friends do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me ?
Oh tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind !
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there ;
But alas, recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair,
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair
There is mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought !
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

ON THE PROMOTION OF EDWARD THURLOW ESQ TO
THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLORSHIP OF ENGLAND

ROUND Thurlow's head in early youth,
And in his sportive days,
Fair science pour'd the light of truth,
And genius shed his rays

See! with united wonder, cried
The experienced and the sage,
Ambition in a boy supplied
With all the skill of age

Discernment, eloquence, and grace,
Proclaim him born to sway
The balance in the highest place,
And bear the palm away

The praise bestow'd was just and wise,
He sprang impetuous forth,
Secure of conquest where the prize
Attends superior worth

So the best courser on the plain,
Ere yet he starts is known,
And does but at the goal obtain
What all had deem'd his own

✓ ODE TO PEACE

Come, peace of mind, delightful guest
Return and make thy downy nest
Once more in this sad heart
Nor riches I, nor pow'r pursue,
Nor hold forbidden joys in view,
We therefore need not part.

Where wilt thou dwell if not with me
From av'rice and ambition free,
And pleasure's fatal wiles,
For whom, alas! dost thou prepare
The sweets that I was wont to share,
The banquet of thy smiles?

The great, the gay, shall they partake
 The heav'n that thou alone canst make,
 And wilt thou quit the stream
 That murmurs through the dewy mead,
 The grove and the sequester'd shed,
 To be a guest with them?

For thee I panted, thee I prized,
 For thee I gladly sacrificed
 Whate'er I loved before,
 And shall I see thee start away,
 And helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—
 Farewell! we meet no more?

HUMAN FRAILTY

WEAK and irresolute is man,
 The purpose of to-day,
 Woven with pains into his plan,
 To-morrow rends away

The bow well bent and smart the spring
 Vice seems already slain,
 But passion rudely snaps the string,
 And it revives again

Some foe to his upright intent
 Finds out his weaker part,
 Virtue engages his assent,
 But pleasure wins his heart

'Tis here the folly of the wise
 Through all his art we view,
 And while his tongue the charge denies
 His conscience owns it true

Bound on a voyage of awful length,
 And dangers little known,
 A stranger to superior strength,
 Man vainly trusts his own

But oars alone can ne'er prevail
 To reach the distant coast,
 The breath of heav'n must swell the sail,
 Or all the toil is lost

THE MODERN PATRIOT

REBLLION is my theme all day,
 I only wish 'twould come
 (As who knows but perhaps it may)
 A little nearer home

Yon roaring boys who rave and fight
 On t'other side the Atlantic,
 I always held them in the right,
 But most so, when most frantic

When lawless mobs insult the court,
 That man shall be my toast,
 If breaking windows be the sport,
 Who bravely breaks the most

But oh! for him my fancy culls
 The choicest flow'rs she bears,
 Who constitutionally pulls
 Your house about your ears

Such civil broils are my delight,
 Though some folks can't endure 'em,
 Who say the mob are mad outright,
 And that a rope must cure 'em.

A rope! I wish we patriots had
 Such strings for all who need 'em—
 What! hang a man for going mad?
 Then farewell British freedom

ON OBSERVING SOME NAMES OF LITTLE NOTE RECORDED
 IN THE "BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA"

On fond attempt to give a deathless lot
 To names ignoble, born to be forgot!
 In vain recorded in historic page,
 They court the notice of a future age
 Those twinkling tiny lustres of the land
 Drop one by one from fame's neglecting hand,
 Lethean gulfs receive them as they fall,
 And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.

So when a child, as playful children use,
 Has burnt to tinder a stale last year's news,
 The flame extinct, he views the roving fire, —
 There goes my lady, and there goes the squire,
 There goes the parson, oh! illustrious spark,
 And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk

REPORT

OF AN ADJUDGED CASE NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY
 OF THE BOOKS

BETWEEN Nose and Eyes a strange contest arose,
 The spectacles set them unhappily wrong,
 The point in dispute was, as all the world knows,
 To which the said spectacles ought to belong

So the Tongue was the lawyer, and argued the cause
 With a great deal of skill, and a wig full of learning,
 While Chief Baron Ear sat to balance the laws,
 So famed for his talent in nicely discerning

In behalf of the Nose, it will quickly appear,
 And your lordship, he said, will undoubtedly find,
 That the Nose has had spectacles always in wear,
 Which amounts to possession time out of mind

Then, holding the spectacles up to the court—
 Your lordship observes they are made with a straddle
 As wide as the ridge of the Nose is, in short,
 Design'd to sit close to it, just like a saddle

Again would your lordship a moment suppose
 ('Tis a case that has happen'd, and may be again)
 That the visage, or countenance, had not a Nose,
 Pray who would or who could wear spectacles then?

On the whole it appears, and my argument shows,
 With a reasoning the court will never condemn,
 That the spectacles plainly were made for the Nose
 And the Nose was as plainly intended for them

Then, shifting his side as a lawyer knows how,
 He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes,
 But what were his arguments few people know,
 For the court did not think they were equally wise

So his lordship decreed with a grave solemn tone,
 Decisive and clear without one if or but—
 That whenever the Nose put his spectacles on
 By daylight or candlelight—Eyes should be shut

ON THE BURNING OF LORD MANSFIELD'S LIBRARY,
 TOGETHER WITH HIS MBS BY THE MOB, IN THE MONTH
 OF JUNE, 1780

So then—the Vandals of our isle
 Sworn foes to sense and law,
 Have burnt to dust a nobler pile
 That ever Roman saw!

And Murray sighs o'er Pope and Swift,
 And many a treasure more
 The well judged purchase and the gift
 That graced his letter'd store

Their pages mangled, burnt, and torn,
 The loss was *his alone*,
 But ages yet to come shall mourn
 The burning of *his own*

ON THE SAME.

When wit and genius meet their doom
 In all devouring flame,
 They tell us of the fate of Rome,
 And bid us fear the same

O'er Murray's loss the muses wept,
 They felt the rude alarm,
 Yet bless'd the guardian care that lent
 His sacred head from harm

There mem'ry, like the bee that's fed
 From Flora's balmy store,
 The quintessence of all he read
 Had treasured up before

The lawless herd with fury blind
 Have done him cruel wrong,
 The flow'rs are gone—but still we find
 The honey on his tongue¹

THE LOVE OF THE WORLD REPROVED, OR, HYPOCRISY DETECTED

THUS says the prophet of the Turk,
 Good Mussulman abstain from pork,
 There is a part in ev'ry swine,
 No friend or follower of mine
 May taste, whate'er his inclination,
 On pain of excommunication
 Such Mahomet's mysterious charge,
 And thus he left the point at large
 Had he the sinful part express'd
 They might with safety eat the rest,
 But for one piece they thought it hard
 From the whole hog to be debarr'd,
 And set their wit at work to find
 What joint the prophet had in mind
 Much controversy straight arose,
 These choose the back, the belly those,
 By some 'tis confidently said
 He meant not to forbid the head,
 While others at that doctrine rail,
 And piously prefer the tail.
 Thus, conscience freed from ev'ry clog,
 Mahometans eat up the hog

You laugh—'tis well—the tale applied
 May make you laugh on t'other side
 Renounce the world, the preacher cries—
 We do—a multitude replies,
 While one as innocent regards
 A snug and friendly game at cards;

¹ Cowper regarded Lord Mansfield with the warmest admiration. Writing of his monument to Hayley (August 27, 1793), he observed,—"I would give much to be able to communicate to Flaxman the perfect idea that I have of the subject, such as he was forty years ago. He was, at that time, wonderfully handsome, and would expound the most mysterious intricacies of the law, or recapitulate both matter and evidence of a cause, as long as from hence to Farnham, with an intelligent smile on his features that bespoke plainly the perfect ease with which he did it."

Yours is, she said, the nobler hue,
 And yours the statelier mien,
 And till a third surpasses you,
 Let each be deem'd a queen

Thus sooth'd and reconciled each seeks
 The fairest British fair,
 The seat of empire is her cheeks,
 They reign united there

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM

Ceu mimicitias quoties parit æmula forma,
 Quam raro pulchræ pulchra placere potest ?
 Sed fines ultra solitos discordia tendit,
 Cum flores ipsos bilis et ira movent

Hortus ubi dulces præbet tacitosque recessus
 Se rapit in partes gens animosa duas,
 Hic sibi regales amaryllis candida cultus,
 Illic purpureo vindicat ore rosa

Ira rosam et meritis quæsitæ superbia tangunt,
 Multaque ferventi vix cohibenda sinu,
 Dum sibi fautorum ciet undique nomina vatùm,
 Jusque suum, multo carmine fulta, probat

Altior emicat illa, et celso vertice nutat,
 Ceu flores inter non habitura parem,
 Fastiditque alios, et nata videtur in usus
 Imperii, sceptrum, Flora quod ipsa gerat

Nec Dea non sensit civilis murmura rixæ,
 Cui curæ est pietas pandere ruris opes
 Deliciasque suas nunquam non prompta tueri,
 Dum licet et locus est, ut tueantur, adest

Et tibi forma datur procerior omnibus, *inquit*,
 Et tibi, principibus qui solet esse, color,
 Et donec vincat quædam formosior ambas,
 Et tibi reginæ nomen, et esto tibi.

Hic ubi sedatus furor est, petit utraque nympham
 Qualem inter Veneres Anglia sola parit,
 Hanc penes imperium est, nihil optant amplius
 hujus
 Regnant in nitidis, et sine lito, genis

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM

A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long
 Had cheer'd the village with his song,
 Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
 Nor yet when eventide was ended,
 Began to feel, as well he might,
 The keen demands of appetite,
 When, looking eagerly around,
 He spied far off upon the ground,
 A something shining in the dark,
 And knew the glow worm by his spark,
 So stooping down from hawthorn top,
 He thought to put him in his crop
 The worm, aware of his intent,
 Harangued him thus right eloquent

Did you admire my lamp, quoth he,
 As much as I your minstrelsy,
 You should abhor to do me wrong,
 As much as I to spoil your song,
 For 'twas the self same Pow'r divine,
 Taught you to sing, and me to shine;
 That you with music, I with light,
 Might beautify and cheer the night
 The songster heard his short oration,
 And warbling out his approbation,
 Released him as my story tells,
 And found a supper somewhere else

Hence jarring sectaries may learn
 Their real interest to discern
 That brother should not war with brother,
 And worry and devour each other,

But sing and shine by sweet consent,
 Till life's poor transient night is spent,
 Respecting in each other's case
 The gifts of nature and of grace

Those Christians best deserve the name
 Who studiously make peace their aim,
 Peace, both the duty and the prize
 Of him that creeps and him that flies

ON A GOLDFINCH

STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE

Time was when I was free as air,
 The thistle's downy seed my fare,
 My drink the morning dew
 I perch'd at will on ev'ry spray,
 My form genteel, my plumage gay,
 My strains for ever new

But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain,
 And form genteel were all in vain
 And of a transient date,
 For, caught and caged and starved to death
 In dying sighs my little breath
 Soon pass'd the wry grate

Thanks, gentle swain, for all my woes,
 And thanks for this effectual close
 And cure of ev'ry ill!
 More cruelty could none express,
 And I, if you had shown me less
 Had been your pris'ner still.

THE PINE-APPLE AND THE BEE.

The pine apples in triple row,
 Were basking hot and all in blow,
 A bee of most discerning taste
 Perceived the fragrance as he pass'd.

On eager wing the spoiler came,
 And search'd for crannies in the frame,
 Urged his attempt on ev'ry side,
 To ev'ry pane his trunk apphed,
 But still in vain, the frame was tight
 And only pervious to the light
 Thus having wasted half the day,
 He trumm'd his flight another way
 Methinks, I said, in thee I find
 The sin and madness of mankind,
 To joys forbidden man aspires,
 Consumes his soul with vain desires,
 Folly the spring of his pursuit,
 And disappointment all the fruit
 While Cynthia oglea as she passes
 The nymph between two cheriot-glasses,
 She is the pine apple, and he
 The silly, unsuccessful bee
 The maid who views with pensive air
 The show glass fraught with ghl't'ring ware,
 Sees watches, bracelets, rings, and lockets,
 But sighs at thought of empty pockets,
 Like thine her appetite is keen,
 But, ah! the cruel glass between!
 Our dear delights are often such,
 Exposed to view but not to touch,
 The sight our foolish heart inflames,
 We long for pine-apples in frames,
 With hopeless wish one looks and lingers,
 One break's the glass and cuts his fingers,
 But they whom truth and wisdom lead,
 Can gather honey from a weed

H O R A C E

BOOK THE SECOND—ODE THE TENTH

RECEIVE, dear friend, the truths I teach,
 So shalt thou live beyond the reach
 Of adverse fortune's pow'r
 Not always tempt the distant deep,
 Nor always timorously creep
 Along the treach'rous shore

He that holds fast the golden mean,
 And lives contentedly between
 The little and the great
 Feels not the wants that pinch the poor,
 Nor plagues that haunt the rich man's door
 Imbitt'ring all his state

The tallest pines feel most the pow'r
 Of wintry blast, the loftiest tow'r
 Comes heaviest to the ground,
 The bolts that spare the mountain's side,
 His cloud-capt eminence divide,
 And spread the ruin round

The well inform'd philosopher
 Rejoices with an wholesome fear,
 And hopes in spite of pain,
 If winter bellow from the north,
 Soon the sweet spring comes dancing forth,
 And nature laughs again.

What if thine heav'n be overcast,
 The dark appearance will not last,
 Expect a brighter sky,
 The God that strings the silver bow,
 Awakes sometimes the Muses too,
 And lays his arrows by

If hindrances obstruct thy way,
 Thy magnanimity display,
 And let thy strength be seen,
 But oh! if Fortune fill thy sail
 With more than a propitious gale,
 Take half thy canvas in

A REFLECTION ON THE FOREGOING ODE

AND is this all? Can reason do no more
 Than bid me shun the deep and dread the shore?
 Sweet moralist, afloat on life's rough sea
 The Christian has a heart unknown to thee,
 He holds no parley with unmanly fears,
 Where duty bids he confidently steers,
 Faces a thousand dangers at her call,
 And, trusting in his God, surmounts them all

TRANSLATIONS FROM VINCENT BOURNE

I — THE GLOW-WORM.

[Cowper's picture of Bourne is so exquisitely painted, that it ought always to be prefixed to his verses — "I love the memory of Vincent Bourne, I think him a better Latin poet than Tibullus, Propertius, Ausonius, or any of the writers in his way, except Ovid, and not at all inferior to him. His humour is entirely original—he can speak of a magpie, or a cat, in terms so exclusively appropriated to the character he draws, that one would suppose him animated by the spirit of the creature he describes, and, with all his drollery, there is a mixture of rational, and even religious reflection, at times, and always an air of pleasantry, good nature, and humanity, that makes him, in my mind, one of the most amiable writers in the world. It is not common to meet with an author who can make you smile, and yet at nobody's expense, who is always entertaining, and yet always harmless, and who, though always elegant and classical to a degree not always found in the classics themselves, charms more by the simplicity and playfulness of his ideas, than by the neatness and purity of his verse"]

BENEATH the hedge, or near the stream,
A worm is known to stray,
That shows by night a lucid beam,
Which disappears by day

Disputes have been, and still prevail
From whence his rays proceed;
Some give that honour to his tail,
And others to his head

But this is sure—the hand of might
That kindles up the skies,
Gives *him* a modicum of light,
Proportion'd to his size

Perhaps indulgent Nature meant,
By such a lamp bestow'd,
To bid the trav'ler, as he went,
Be careful where he trod

¹ To Unwin, May 23, 1781.

Nor crush a worm, whose useful light
Might serve, however small,
To show a stumbling stone by night,
And save him from a fall

Whate'er she meant, this truth divine
Is legible and plain,
'Tis Power almighty bids him shine,
Nor bids him shine in vain

Ye proud and wealthy, let this theme
Teach humbler thoughts to you,
Since such a reptile has its gem,
And boasts its splendour too

II — THE JACKDAW

THERE is a bird, who by his coat,
And by the hoarseness of his note,
Might be supposed a crow,
A great frequenter of the church,
Where, bishop-like, he finds a perch,
And dormitory too

Above the steeple shines a plate,
That turns and turns, to indicate
From what point blows the weather;
Look up—your brains begin to swim,
'Tis in the clouds—that pleases him,
He chooses it the rather

Fond of the speculative height,
Thither he wings his airy flight,
And thence securely sees
The bustle and the raree show
That occupy mankind below,
Secure and at his ease

You think no doubt he sits and muses
On future broken bones and bruises,
If he should chance to fall,
No, not a single thought like that
Employs his philosophic pate,
Or troubles it at all

III THE CHICKEN

LITTLE ARE ST, full of mirth
 Clurping on my kitchen hearth,
 Wheresoe'er be thine abode,
 Always bringer of good,
 Pay me for thy warm retreat
 With a song more soft and sweet.
 In return thou shalt receive
 Such a strain as I can give

Thus thy praise shall be expressed
 Inoffensive, welcome guest!
 While the rat is on the scout
 And the mouse with curious snout,
 With what vermin else infest
 Every dish and spoil the best,
 Frisking thus before the fire
 Thou hast all thine hearts desire

Though in voice and shape they be
 Form'd as if akin to thee,
 Thou surpasses't, happier far,
 Happiest grasshoppers that are;
 Thine is but a summer song,
 Thine endures the winter long
 Unimpair'd and shrill and clear,
 Melody throughout the year

¹ "You will find, in comparing the *Janas* with the original that I was obliged to sharpen a point, which, though smart enough in the Latin, would in English have appeared as plain and as blunt as the tag of a lice."—(J. F. FORD, May 23 1711)

Neither night, nor dawn of day,
 Puts a period to thy play,
 Sing then—and extend thy span
 Far beyond the date of man—
 Wretched man, whose years are spent
 In repining discontent,
 Lives not, aged though he be,
 Half a span compared with thee

IV - THE PARROT

In painted plumes superbly drest,
 A native of the gorgeous east,
 By many a billow tost;
 Poll gains at length the British shore,
 Part of the captain's precious store,
 A present to his toast

Behinda's maids are soon preferr'd
 To teach him now and then a word,
 As Poll can master it,
 But 'tis her own important charge
 To qualify him more at large,
 And make him quite a wit.

Sweet Poll! his doting mistress cries,
 Sweet Poll! the mimic bird replies,
 And calls aloud for sack.
 She next instructs him in the kiss,
 'Tis now a little one like Miss,
 And now a hearty smack.

At first he aims at what he hears,
 And, list'ning close with both his ears,
 Just catches at the sound,
 But soon articulates aloud,
 Much to th' amusement of the crowd,
 And stuns the neighbours round

A querulous old woman's voice
 His hum'rous talent next employs,
 He scolds and gives the lie
 And now he sings, and now is sick,—
 Here Sally, Susan, come, come quick,
 Poor Poll is like to die

Belinda and her bird! 'tis rare
 To meet with such a well-match'd pair
 The language and the tone,
 Each character in every part
 Sustain'd with so much grace and art
 And both in unison

When children first begin to spell
 And stammer out a syllable,
 We think them tedious creatures
 But difficulties soon abate,
 When birds are to be taught to prate,
 And women are the teachers

THE SHRUBBERY

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION

Oh happy shades! to me unblest,
 Friendly to peace, but not to me;
 How ill the scene that offers rest
 And heart that cannot rest, agree!

This glassy stream, that spreading pine,
 Those alders quiv'ring to the breeze,
 Might soothe a soul less hurt than mine,
 And please, if anything could please

But fixt unalterable care
 Foregoes not what she feels within,
 Shows the same sadness ev'ry where,
 And slights the season and the scene

For all that pleased in wood or lawn,
 While peace possess'd these silent bow'rs
 Her animating smile withdrawn,
 Has lost its beauties and its pow'rs

The saint or moralist should tread
 This moss grown alley, musing slow;
 They seek like me the secret shade,
 But not like me, to nourish woe

Under the name of the Spinnie, the "Shrubbery" has gayer memories of the poet. It was a sweet spot, shaded by sycamores and overhanging trees with a Moss House in the midst.

Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste
 Alike admonish not to roam,
 These tell me of enjoyments past,
 And those of sorrows yet to come

THE WINTER NOSEGAY

WHAT nature, alas! has denied
 To the delicate growth of our isle,
 Art has in a measure supplied,
 And winter is deck'd with a smile
 See Mary what beauties I bring
 From the shelter of that sunny shed,
 Where the flow'rs have the charms of the spring,
 Though abroad they are frozen and dead

'Tis a bow'r of Arcadian sweets,
 Where Flora is still in her prime,
 A fortress to which she retreats,
 From the cruel assaults of the clime
 While earth wears a mantle of snow,
 These pinks are as fresh and as gay
 As the fairest and sweetest that blow
 On the beautiful bosom of May

See how they have safely survived
 The frowns of a sky so severe,
 Such Mary's true love that has lived
 Through many a turbulent year
 The charms of the late-blowing rose,
 Seem graced with a livelier hue,
 And the winter of sorrow best shows
 The truth of a friend, such as you.

MUTUAL FORBEARANCE

NECESSARY TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE MARRIED STATE

THE lady thus address'd her spouse—
 What a mere dungeon is this house!
 By no means large enough, and, was it,
 Yet this dull room and that dark closet.

Those hangings with their worn out graces
 Long beards, long noses, and pale faces,
 Are such an antique scene,
 They overwhelm me with the spleen
 — As Humphry, shouting in the dark,
 Tells us is quite beside the mark.
 No doubt, my dear, I bade him come,
 I told him *if to be at home,*
 And shall expect him at the door
 Precisely when the clock strikes four.
 You are so deaf, the lady cried,
 (And raised her voice and frown'd beside,)
 You are so sadly deaf, my dear
 What shall I do to make you hear?
 Denies poor Harry! he replies,
 Some people are more nice than wise,—
 For one slight trespass all this stir?
 What if he did ride whip and spur,
 'Twas but a mile—your favourite horse
 Will never look one hair the worse.
 Well I protest us past all hearing—
 Clab! I am rather hard of hearing—
 Yet truly—one must scream and bawl,
 I tell you you can't hear at all,
 Though, with a voice exceeding low,
 No matter if you hear or no

Preserved by virtue from declension,
 Becomes not weary of attention,
 But lives, when that exterior grace
 Which first inspired the flame decays
 'Tis gentle, delicate, and kind,
 To faults compassionate or blind,
 And will with sympathy endure
 Those evils it would gladly cure
 But angry, coarse, and harsh expression
 Shows love to be a mere profession,
 Proves that the heart is none of his,
 Or soon expels him if it is.

TO THE REV MR NEWTON

AN INVITATION INTO THE COUNTRY

THE swallows in their torpid state,
 Compose their useless wing,
 And bees in hives as idly wait
 The call of early spring

The keenest frost that binds the stream,
 The wildest wind that blows,
 Are neither felt nor fear'd by them,
 Secure of their repose

But man all feeling and awake
 The gloomy scene surveys,
 With present ills his heart must ache,
 And pant for brighter days

Old winter halting o'er the mead,
 Bids me and Mary mourn,
 But lovely spring peeps o'er his head,
 And whispers your return

'Then April, with her sister May,
 Shall chase him from the bow'rs,
 And weave fresh garlands ev'ry day,
 To crown the smiling hours

And if a tear that speaks regret
 Of happier time appear,
 A glimpse of joy that we have met
 Shall shine and dry the tear

TRANSLATION OF PRIOR'S CHLOE AND EUPHELIA.

MERCATOR, vigilis oculos ut fallere possit,
 Nomine sub ficto trans mare mittit opes,
 Lend' sonat liquidamque meis Euphelia chordis,
 Sed solam exoptant te, mea vota, Chlōe

Ad speculum ornabat nitidos Euphelia crines,
 Cum dixit mea lux, heus, cane, sume lyram
 Namque lyram juxta positam cum carmine vidit,
 Suave quidem carmen dulcisonamque lyram

Fila lyre vocemque paro, suspiria surgunt,
 Et miscent numeris murmura mesta meis,
 Dumque tuæ memoro laudes, Euphelia, formæ,
 Tota anima interea pendet ab ore Chlōes

Subrabet illa pudore, et contrahit altera frontem.
 Me torquet mea mens conscia, psallo, tremo;
 Atque Cupidineâ dixit Dea cincta coronâ,
 Heu! fallendi artem quam didicere parum

BOADICHA

AN ODE

WHEN the British warrior queen
 Bleeding from the Roman rods
 Sought, with an indignant mien,
 Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath a spreading oak
 Sat the Druid, hoary chief,
 Ev'ry burning word he spoke,
 Full of rage and full of grief

Princess! if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues

Rome shall perish—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt,
Perish hopeless and abhorr'd,
Deep in ruin as in guilt

Rome, for empire far renown'd,
Tramples on a thousand states,
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates

Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name,
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway,
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre

She with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow,
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died,
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heav'n awards the vengeance due,
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you

HEROISM

THERE was a time when *Ætna's* silent fire
 Slept unperceived, the mountain yet entire,
 When, conscious of no danger from below,
 She tower'd a cloud cap'd pyramid of snow
 No thunders shook with deep intestine sound
 The blooming groves that girdled her around.
 Her unctuous olives and her purple vines,
 (Unfelt the fury of those bursting mines)
 The peasant's hopes, and not in vain, assured,
 In peace upon her sloping sides matur'd
 When on a day, like that of the last doom,
 A conflagration lab'ring in her womb,
 She teem'd and heaved with an infernal birth,
 That shook the circling seas and solid earth
 Dark and voluminous the vapours rise,
 And hang their honors in the neighb'ring skies,
 While through the Stygian veil that blots the day,
 In dazzling streaks the vivid lightnings play
 But, oh! what muse, and in what pow'rs of song,
 Can trace the torrent as it burns along?
 Havock and devastation in the van,
 It marches o'er the prostrate works of man—
 Vines, olives, herbage, forests disappear,
 And all the charms of a Sicilian year
 Revolving seasons, fruitless as they pass,
 See it an uninform'd and idle mass,
 Without a soil to invite the tiller's care,
 Or blade that might redeem it from despair
 Yet time at length (what will not time achieve?)
 Clothes it with earth, and bids the produce live
 Once more the spiry myrtle crowns the glade,
 And ruminating flocks enjoy the shade
 Oh bliss precarious, and unsafe retreats,
 Oh charming paradise of short lived sweets!
 The selfsame gale that wafts the fragrance round,
 Brings to the distant ear a sullen sound,
 Again the mountain feels th' imprison'd foe,
 Again pours ruin on the vale below
 Ten thousand swains the wasted scene deplore,
 That only future ages can restore
 Ye monarchs, whom the lure of honour draws,
 Who write in blood the merits of your cause,

Who strike the blow, then plead your own defence,—
 Glory your aim, but justice your pretence,
 Behold in Ætna's emblematic fires
 The mischiefs your ambitious pride inspires
 Fast by the stream that bounds your just
 domain,

And tells you where ye have a right to reign,
 A nation dwells, not envious of your throne,
 Studious of peace, their neighbours' and their
 own

Ill-fated race! how deeply must they rue
 Their only crime, vicinity to you!
 The trumpet sounds, your legions swarm ahead,
 Through the ripe harvest lies their destined road;
 At ev'ry step beneath their feet they tread
 The life of multitudes, a nation's bread!
 Earth seems a garden in its loveliest dress
 Before them, and behind a wilderness
 Famine, and pestilence, her first-born son,
 Attend to finish what the sword begun,
 And echoing praises such as fiends might earn,
 And folly pays, resound at your return
 A calm succeeds—but Plenty, with her train
 Of heart-felt joys, succeeds not soon again,
 And years of pining indigence must show
 What scourges are the gods that rule below

Yet man, laborious man, by slow degrees,
 (Such is his thirst of opulence and ease)
 Plies all the sinews of industrious toil,
 Gleans up the refuse of the general spoil,
 Rebuilds the tow'rs that smoked upon the plain,
 And the sun gilds the shining spires again

Increasing commerce and reviving art
 Renew the quarrel on the conqueror's part,
 And the sad lesson must be learn'd once more,
 That wealth within is ruin at the door

What are ye, monarchs, laurel'd heroes, say,
 But Ætnas of the suffering world ye sway?
 Sweet Nature, stripp'd of her embroider'd robe,
 Deplores the wasted regions of her globe,
 And stands a witness at truth's awful bar,
 To prove you, there, destroyers as ye are

Oh place me in some heav'n protected isle,
 Where peace and equity and freedom smile,
 Where no volcano pours his fiery flood,
 No crested warrior dips his plume in blood.

Where pow'r secures what industry has won,
 Where to succeed is not to be undone.
 A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,
 In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign

THE POET, THE OYSTER, AND SENSITIVE PLANT

AN Oyster, cast upon the shore,
 Was heard, though never heard before,
 Complaining in a speech well worded,
 And worthy thus to be recorded

Ah, hapless wretch ! condemn'd to dwell
 For ever in my native shell,
 Ordain'd to move when others please,
 Not for my own content or ease,
 But toss'd and buffeted about,
 Now *in* in the water, and now *out*,
 'Twere better to be born a stone,
 Of ruder shape and feeling none,
 Than with a tenderness like mine,
 And sensibilities so fine!
 I envy that unfeeling shrub,
 Fast-rooted against ev'ry rub
 The plant he meant given not far off,
 And felt the sneer with scorn enough,
 Was hurt, disgusted, mortified,
 And with asperity replied

When, cry the botanists, and stare,
 Did plants call'd sensitive grow there?
 No matter when—a poet's muse is
 To make them grow just where she chooses

You shapeless nothing in a dish,
 You that are but almost a fish,
 I scorn your coarse insinuation,
 And have most plentiful occasion
 To wish myself the rock I view,
 Or such another dolt as you.
 For many a grave and learned clerk,
 And many a gay unletter'd spark,
 With curious touch examines me,
 If I can feel as well as he,
 And when I bend, retire, and shrink,
 Says—Well, 'tis more than one would think——

Thus life is spent (oh, fie upon't!)
 In being touch'd, and crying—Don't!
 A poet, in his evening walk,
 O'erheard and check'd this idle talk,
 And your fine sense, he said, and yours,
 Whatever evil it endures,
 Deserves not, if so soon offended,
 Much to be pitied or commended
 Disputes though short, are far too long,
 Where both alike are in the wrong
 Your feelings, in their full amount,
 Are all upon your own account
 You in your grotto-work enclosed
 Complain of being thus exposed,
 Yet nothing feel in that rough coat,
 Save when the knife is at your throat,
 Wherever driv'n by wind or tide,
 Exempt from every ill beside
 And as for you, my Lady Squeamish,
 Who reckon ev'ry touch a blemish,
 If all the plants that can be found
 Embellishing the scene around,
 Should droop and wither where they grow,
 You would not feel at all, not you.
 The noblest minds their virtue prove
 By pity, sympathy, and love,
 These, these are feelings truly fine,
 And prove their owner half divine
 His censure reach'd them as he dealt it,
 And each by shrinking show'd he felt it

TO THE REV WILLIAM CAWTHORNE UNWIN

UNWIN, I should but ill repay
 The kindness of a friend,
 Whose worth deserves as warm a lay
 As ever friendship penn'd,
 Thy name omitted in a page
 That would reclaim a vicious age
 An union form'd, as mine with thee,
 Not rashly or in sport,
 May be as fervent in degree,
 And faithful in its sort,
 And may as rich in comfort prove,
 As that of true fraternal love

THE TASK

BOOK I.—THE SOFA

[“The history of the following production is briefly this—A lady, friend of Mr. Newton, demanded a poem of that kind from the author, and gave him the Sofa for a subject. He obeyed, and having much leisure, connected another subject with it, and, pursuing the train of thought to which his situation and turn of mind led him, brought forth, at length, instead of the trifle which he at first intended, a *Traveller's Tale*—a Volume.” Such was the short and graceful introduction to the Task.]

The author's vindication of the title is given in a letter to Mr. Newton, December 13, 1781:—“As to the title I take it to be the best that is to be had. It is not possible that a book included so much a variety of subjects, and in which no particular one is predominant, should find a title adapted to them all. In such a case, it seemed almost necessary to accommodate the name to the incident that gave birth to the poem, nor does it appear to me that because I performed more than my task, therefore the Task is not a suitable title. A house would still be a house, though the builder of it should make it ten times as big as he at first intended. I might, indeed, following the example of the Sunday newspaper, call it the *Ohio*, but I should do myself wrong, for though it have much variety, it has, I trust, no confusion.” Newton disliked the name, but the poet was resolute in his choice.]

ARGUMENT

Historical deduction of seats, from the stool to the Sofa—A school boy's ramble—A walk in the country—The scene described—Rural rounds as well as sights delightful—Another walk—Mistake concerning the charms of solitude, corrected—Colonnades

[“None of the titles apply themselves to the contents at large of that book to which they belong. They are, every one of them, taken from the leading (I should say the introductory) passage of that particular book, or from that which makes the most conspicuous figure in it. The *Sofa*, being, as I may say, the starting point from which I addressed myself to the long race, that I soon conceived a design to run, it acquired a just pre-eminence in my account, and was very worthily advanced to the titular honour it enjoys, its right being at least so far a good one, that no word in the language could pre- tend a better.—(To Mr. Newton, Dec. 13, 1781.)

commended—Alcove and the view from it—The wilderness—The grove—The thresher—The necessity and the benefits of exercise—The works of nature superior to and in some instances imitable by art—The wearisomeness of what is commonly called a life of pleasure—Change of scene sometimes expedient—A common described, and the character of Crazy Kate introduced upon it—Gipsies—The blessings of civilized life—That state most favourable to virtue—The South Sea Islanders compassionated, but chiefly Omai—His present state of mind supplied—Civilized life friendly to virtue, but not great cities—Great cities, and London in particular, allowed their due praise, but censured—Fête champêtre—The book concludes with a reflection on the fatal effects of dissipation and effeminacy upon our public measures.

I sing the Sofa I, who lately sang
Truth, Hope, and Charity, and touch'd with awe
The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,
Escaped with pain from that advent'rous flight,
Now seek repose upon a humbler theme,
The theme though humble, yet august and proud
Th' occasion—for the Fair commands the song.

Time was, when clothing sumptuous or for use,
Save their own painted skins, our sires had none
As yet black breeches were not, satin smooth,
Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile
The hardy chief upon the rugged rock
Wash'd by the sea, or on the gravelly bank
Thrown up by wintry torrents roaring loud,
Fearless of wrong, reposed his weary strength
Those barb'rous ages past, succeeded next
The birth day of invention, weak at first,
Dull in design, and clumsy to perform
Joint-stools were then created, on three legs
Upborne they stood. Three legs upholding firm
A massy slab, in fashion square or round.
On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,
And sway'd the sceptre of his infant realms,
And such in ancient halls and mansions drear
May still be seen, but perforated sore
And drill'd in holes the solid oak is found,
By worms voracious eating through and through

At length a generation more refined
Improved the simple plan, made three legs four,
Gave them a twisted form vermicular,
And o'er the seat, with plenteous wadding stuff'd

Indured a splendid cover green and blue,
 Yellow and red, of tap'stry richly wrought
 And woven close, or needle work sublime
 There might ye see the piony spread wide,
 The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his lass,
 Lap dog and lambkin with black staring eyes,
 And parrots with twin cherries in their beak.

Now came the cane from India, smooth and bright
 With Nature's varnish, sever'd into stripes
 That interlaced each other, these supplied,
 Of texture firm, a lattice work that braced
 The new machine, and it became a chair
 But restless was the chair, the back erect
 Distress'd the weary loins that felt no ease,
 The slipp'ry seat betray'd the sliding part
 That press'd it, and the feet hung dangling down,
 Anxious in vain to find the distant floor
 These for the rich the rest, whom fate had placed
 In modest mediocrity, content
 With base materials, sat on well-tann'd hides
 Obdurate and unyielding, glassy smooth,
 With here and there a tuft of crimson yarn,
 Or scarlet crewel in the cushion fixt
 If cushion might be call'd, what harder seem'd
 Than the firm oak of which the frame was form'd
 No want of timber then was felt or fear'd
 In Albion's happy isle The lumber stood
 Pend'rous, and fixt by its own massy weight
 But elbows still were wanting, these, some say,
 An Alderman of Cripplegate contrived,
 And some ascribe th' invention to a priest
 Burly and big, and studious of his ease
 But rude at first, and not with easy slope
 Receding wide, they press'd against the ribs,
 And bruised the side, and elevated high
 Taught the raised shoulders to invade the ears
 Long time elapsed or o'er our rugged sires
 Complain'd, though incommodiously pent in,
 And ill at ease behind The ladies first
 'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex
 Ingenious fancy, never better pleas'd
 Than when employ'd t' accommodate the fair
 Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devise'd
 The soft settlee, one elbow at each end,
 And in the midst an elbow it receive!

United yet divided, twain at once
 So sit two Kings of Brentford on one throne ;
 And so two citizens who take the air,
 Close pack'd and smiling in a chaise and one
 But relaxation of the languid frame
 By soft recumbency of outstretched limbs,
 Was bliss reserved for happier days , so slow
 The growth of what is excellent, so hard
 T' attain perfection in this nether world
 Thus first necessity invented stools,
 Convenience next suggested elbow-chairs,
 And luxury th' accomplished Sofa last

The nurse sleeps sweetly, hired to watch the sick
 Whom snoring she disturbs As sweetly he
 Who quits the coach box at the midnight hour
 To sleep within the carriage more secure,
 His legs depending at the open door
 Sweet sleep enjoys the Curate in his desk,
 The tedious Rector drawing o'er his head,
 And sweet the Clerk below but neither sleep
 Of lazy Nurse, who snores the sick man dead,
 Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour
 To slumber in the carriage more secure,
 Nor sleep enjoy'd by Curate in his desk,
 Nor yet the dozings of the Clerk are sweet,
 Compared with the repose the SOFA yields

Oh may I live exempted (while I live
 Guiltless of pamper'd appetite obscene)
 From pangs arthritic that infest the toe
 Of libertine excess The SOFA suits
 The gouty limb, 'tis true, but gouty limb,
 Though on a SOFA, may I never feel
 For I have loved the rural walk through lanes
 Of grassy swarth, close cropp'd by nibbling sheep
 And skirted thick with intertexture firm
 Of thorny boughs have loved the rural walk
 O'er hills, through valleys, and by river's brink,
 E'er since a truant boy I pass'd my bounds
 T' enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames
 And still remember, nor without regret
 Of hours that sorrow since has much endear'd,
 How oft, my slice of pocket store consumed,
 Still hung'ring penniless and far from home
 I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws,

Or blushing crabs, or berries that imbosa
 The bramble, black as jet, or sloes austere
 Hard fare I but such as boyish appetite
 Disdains not, nor the palate undepraved
 By culinary arts unsw'ry deems
 No Sora then awaited my return,
 No Sora then I needed Youth repairs
 His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil
 Incurring short fatigue, and though our years,
 As life declines, speed rapidly away,
 And not a year but pilfers as he goes
 Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep,
 A tooth or auburn lock, and by degrees
 Their length and colour from the locks they spare,
 Th' elastic spring of an unweary'd foot
 That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,
 That play of lungs inhaling and again
 Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes
 Swift pace or steep ascent no toil to me,
 Mine have not pilder'd yet, nor yet impair'd
 My relish of fair prospect, scenes that sooth'd
 Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find
 Still soothing and of power to charm me still
 And witness, dear companion of my walks,
 Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive
 I fast lock'd in mine, with pleasure such as love,
 Confirm'd by long experience of thy worth
 And well tried virtues, could alone inspire—
 Witness a joy that thou hast doubled long
 Thou know'st my praise of nature most sincere,
 And that my raptures are not conjured up
 To serve occasions of poetic pomp,
 But genuine, and art partner of them all
 How oft upon yon eminence, our pace

1 "From the town of Olney, westward, over three fields, the ascent a gradual to the eminence referred to by the poet in these lines. From this elevation is seen a prospect extensive in every direction but the north, which is bounded by a quick hedge, on rising ground. To the eastward is Stevenston, a Bedfordshire; farther east stands the 'square tower' of Clifton Church, and ranging still eastward, the prospect is bounded by Clifton Wood; till, due east, is seen the 'tall spire' of Olney Church, and a considerable part of the town. To the southward is the pleasant village of Emberton, on the right of which appears, when the weather is clear, Bowbrick hill, the church on its summit, at the distance of nearly fourteen miles. Due south, in an extensive valley, appear the devious windings of the river Ouse, whose mazy and deceptive course assumes the resemblance of various streams. The meadows are likewise intersected by dikes, cut for the purpose of draining floods, which give the land, even in times of drought, a delightful verdure"—
Copper Illustrated, 1843, p. 31

Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have borne
 The ruffling wind scarce conscious that it blew,
 While admiration feeding at the eye,
 And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene!
 Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd
 The distant plough slow-moving, and beside
 His lab'ring team, that swerved not from the track
 The sturdy swain diminish'd to a boy!
 Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain
 Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,
 Conducts the eye along his sinuous course
 Delighted There, fast rooted in his bank
 Stand, never overlook'd, our fav'rite elms
 That screen the herdsman's solitary hut,
 While far beyond and overthwart the stream
 That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale,
 The sloping land recedes into the clouds,
 Displaying on its varied side the grace
 Of hedge row beauties numberless, square tow'r,
 Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
 Just undulates upon the list'ning ear,
 Groves, heaths, and smoking villages remote
 Scenes must be beautiful which daily view'd
 Please daily, and whose novelty survives
 Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years,
 Praise justly due to those that I describe

Not rural sights alone, but rural sounds
 Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
 The tone of languid Nature Mighty winds,
 That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
 Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
 The dash of ocean on his winding shore,
 And lull the spirit while they fill the mind,
 Unnumber'd branches waving in the blast,
 And all their leaves fast flutt'ring, all at once
 Nor less composure waits upon the roar
 Of distant floods, or on the softer voice
 Of neighb'ring fountain, or of rills that slip
 Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall
 Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length
 In matted grass, that with a livelier green
 Betrays the secret of their silent course
 Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,
 But animated Nature sweeter still
 To soothe and satisfy the human ear

Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one¹
 The livelong night nor these alone whose notes
 Nice-finger'd art must emulate in vain,
 But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime
 In still repeated circles, screaming loud,
 The jay, the pie, and ev'n the boding owl
 That hails the rising moon, have charms for me
 Sounds unharmonious in themselves and harsh,
 Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever reigns,
 And only there, please highly for their sake

Peace to the artist, whose ingenious thought
 Devised the weather-house, that useful toy !
 Fearless of humid air and gathering rains
 Forth steps the man—an emblem of myself !
 More delicate his tum'rous mate retires
 When Winter soaks the fields, and female lect,
 Too weak to struggle with tenacious clay,
 Or ford the rivulets, are best at home,
 The task of new discoveries falls on me
 At such a season and with such a charge
 Once went I forth, and found, till then unknown,
 A cottage, whither oft we since repair
 'Tis perch'd upon the green-hill top, but close
 Environ'd with a ring of branching elms
 That overhang the thatch, itself unseen
 Peeps at the vale below, so thick beset
 With foliage of such dark redundant growth,
 I call'd the low-roof'd lodge the *peasant's nest*²
 And hidden as it is, and far remote
 From such unpleasing sounds as haunt the ear
 In village or in town, the bay of curs
 Incessant, clinking hammers, grinding wheels,
 And infants clam'rous whether pleased or pain'd,
 Oft have I wish'd the peaceful covert mine
 Here, I have said, at least I should possess
 The poet's treasure, silence, and indulge
 The dreams of fancy, tranquil and secure
 Vain thought ! the dweller in that still retreat
 Dearly obtains the refuge it affords
 Its elevated site forbids the wretch
 To drink sweet waters of the crystal well ;
 He dips his bowl into the weedy ditch,

¹ Cowper's ornithology was only poetical, the nightingale has a rival in the blackcap

² It stood about half a mile from Weston House.

And heavy-laden brings his bev'rage home,
 Far-fetch'd and little worth ¹ nor seldom wants,
 Dependant on the baker's punctual call,
 To hear his creaking panniers at the door,
 Angry and sad and his last crust consumed.
 So farewell envy of the *peasant's nest*
 If solitude make scant the means of life,
 Society for me! Thou seeming sweet,
 Be still a pleasing object in my view,
 My visit still, but never mine abode

Not distant far, a length of colonnade
 Invites us, monument of ancient taste,
 Now scorn'd, but worthy of a better fate
 Our fathers knew the value of a screen
 From sultry suns, and, in their shaded walks
 And long-protracted bow'rs, enjoy'd at noon
 The gloom and coolness of declining day
 We bear our shades about us, self-deprived
 Of other screen, the thin umbrella spread,
 And range an Indian waste without a tree
 Thanks to Benevolus²—he spares me yet
 These chestnuts ranged in corresponding lines,
 And, though himself so polish'd, still reprieves
 The obsolete prolixity of shade

Descending now (but cautious, lest too fast)
 A sudden steep, upon a rustic bridge³
 We pass a gulf, in which the willows dip
 Their pendent boughs, stooping as if to drink
 Hence ankle deep in moss and flow'ry thyme
 We mount again, and feel at ev'ry step
 Our foot half sunk in hillocks green and soft,
 Ruined by the mole, the miner of the soil
 He, not unlike the great ones of mankind,
 Disfigures earth, and plotting in the dark
 Toils much to earn a monumental pile,
 That may record the mischiefs he has done
 The summit gain'd, behold the proud alcove⁴
 That crowns it! yet not all its pride secures

¹ A well was sit'wards sunk In 1847 the "peasant's nest" had grown into a farm house, with its next and out buildings

² John Courtney Throckmorton Esq., of Weston Underwood

³ The bridge spanned a track, which, after winding through the Park, crossed the road from Olney to Northampton, at a place called Over Brook

⁴ A graceful little structure of roof

The grand retreat from injuries impress'd
By rural carvers, who with knives deface
The panels, leaving an obscure rude name
In characters uncouth, and spelt amiss
So strong the zeal t'immortalize himself
Beats in the breast of man, that ev'n a few
Few transient years, won from th' abyss abhorr'd
Of blank oblivion, seem a glorious prize,
And even to a clown Now roves the eye,
And posted on this speculative height
Exults in its command The sheepfold here
Pours out its fleecy tenants o'er the glebe
At first, progressive as a stream, they seek
The middle field, but scatter'd by degrees,
Each to his choice, soon whiten all the land
There, from the sunburnt hay-field homeward creeps
The loaded wain, while, lighten'd of its charge,
The wain that meets it passes swiftly by,
The boorish driver leaning o'er his team,
Vociferous, and impatient of delay
Nor less attractive is the woodland scene
Diversified with trees of ev'ry growth,
Alike yet various Here the gray smooth trunks
Of ash, or lime, or beech, distinctly shine,
Within the twilight of their distant shades,
There, lost behind a rising ground, the wood
Seems sunk, and shorten'd to its topmost boughs
No tree in all the grove but has its charms,
Though each its hue peculiar, paler some,
And of a wannish gray, the willow such,
And poplar that with silver lines his leaf,
And ash far-stretching his umbrageous arm,
Of deeper green the elm, and deeper still,
Lord of the woods, the long-surviving oak
Some glossy-leaved and shining in the sun,
The maple, and the beech of oily nuts
Prolific, and the lime at dewy eve
Diffusing odours nor unnoted pass
The sycamore, capricious in attire,
Now green, now tawny, and ere autumn yet
Have changed the woods, in scarlet honours bright.
O'er these, but far beyond, (a spacious map
Of hill and valley interposed between)
The Ouse, dividing the well-water'd land,
Now glitters in the sun, and now retires,
As bashful, yet impatient to be seen

Hence the declivity is sharp and short,
 And such the re ascent, between them weeps
 A little Naiad¹ her improv'ish'd urn
 All summer long, which winter fills again
 The folded gates would bar my progress now,
 But that the lord of this enclosed demesne,
 Communicative of the good he owns,
 Admits me to a share² the guiltless eye
 Commits no wrong, nor wastes what it enjoys
 Refreshing change! where now the blazing sun
 By short transition we have lost his glare,
 And stepp'd at once into a cooler clime.
 Ye fallen avenues! once more I mourn
 Your fate unmerited, once more rejoice
 That yet a remnant of your race survives
 How airy and how light the graceful arch,
 Yet awful as the consecrated roof
 Re echoing pious anthems! while beneath,
 The chequer'd earth seems restless as a flood
 Brush'd by the wind So sportive is the light
 Shot through the boughs, it dances as they dance,
 Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,
 And dark'ning and enlight'ning, as the leaves
 Play wanton, ev'ry moment, ev'ry spot.

And now, with nerves new-braced and spirits cheer'd,
 We tread the wilderness,³ whose well-roll'd walks,
 With curvature of slow and easy sweep—
 Deception innocent—give ample space
 To narrow bounds The grove receives us next;
 Between the upright shafts of whose tall elms
 We may discern the thresher at his task
 Thump after thump, resounds the constant flail
 That seems to swing uncertain, and yet falls
 Full on the destined ear Wide flies the chaff,
 The rustling straw sends up a frequent mist
 Of atoms, sparkling in the noonday beam
 Come hither, ye that press your beds of down
 And sleep not see him sweating o'er his bread
 Before he eats it — 'Tis the primal curse,

¹ The Naiad was a narrow channel to drain the hollow

² Sir John Throckmorton allowed Cowper to have the key of the grounds

³ On the left is the statue of a lion, finely carved in a recumbent posture; this is placed on a basement at the end of a grassy walk, which is shaded by yews and elms mingled with the drooping foliage of the laburnum, and adorned with *Salix* of flaunting woodbine. (1824)

But soften'd into mercy, made the pledge
Of cheerful days, and nights without a groan.

By ceaseless action, all that is subsists
Constant rotation of th' unwearied wheel
That Nature rides upon, maintains her health,
Her beauty, her fertility She dreads
An instant's pause, and lives but while she moves.
Its own revolveny upholds the world
Winds from all quarters agitate the air,
And fit the limpid element for use,
Else noxious oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams
All feel the fresh'ning impulse, and are cleansed
By restless undulation ev'n the oak
Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm
He seems indeed indignant, and to feel
Th' impression of the blast with proud disdain,
Frowning as if in his unconscious arm
He held the thunder But the monarch owes
His firm stability to what he scorns,
More fixt below, the more disturb'd above
The law, by which all creatures else are bound,
Binds man the lord of all Himself derives
No mean advantage from a kindred cause,
From strenuous toil his hours of sweetest ease
The sedentary stretch thoir lazy length
When custom bids, but no refreshment find,
For none they need the languid eye, the cheek
Deserted of its bloom, the flaccid, shrunk,
And wither'd muscle, and the vapid soul,
Reproach their owner with that love of rest,
To which he forfeits ev'n the rest he loves
Not such th' alort and active Measure life
By its true worth, the comforts it affords,
And theirs alone seems worthy of the name
Good health, and, its associate in the most,
Good temper, spirits prompt to undertake,
And not soon spent, though in an arduous task,
The pow'rs of fancy and strong thought are thirs;
Ev'n age itself seems privileged in them
With clear exemption from its own defects
A sparkling eye beneath a wrinkled front
The vet'ran shows, and gracing a gray beard
With youthful smiles, descends toward the grave
Sprightly, and old almost without decay

Like a coy maiden, Ease, when courted most,
 Farthest retires—an idol, at whose shrine
 Who oft'nest sacrifice are favour'd least
 The love of Nature, and the scenes she draws,
 Is Nature's dictate Strange! there should be found
 Who, self-imprison'd in their proud saloons,
 Renounce the odours of the open field
 For the unscented fictions of the loom,
 Who, satisfied with only pencil'd scenes,
 Prefer to the performance of a God
 Th' inferior wonders of an artist's hand.
 Lovely indeed the mimic works of art,
 But Nature's works far lovelier I admire,
 None more admires, the painter's magic skill,
 Who shows me that which I shall never see,
 Conveys a distant country into mine,
 And throws Italian light on English walls
 But imitative strokes can do no more
 Than please the eye, sweet Nature ev'ry sense
 The air salubrious of her lofty hills,
 The cheering fragrance of her dewy vales,
 And music of her woods—no works of man
 May rival these, these all bespeak a power
 Peculiar, and exclusively her own
 Beneath the open sky she spreads the feast,
 'Tis free to all—'tis ev'ry day renew'd,
 Who scorns it, starves deservedly at home
 He does not scorn it, who, imprison'd long
 In some unwholesome dungeon, and a prey
 To sallow sickness, which the vapours dank
 And clammy of his dark abode have bred,
 Escapes at last to liberty and light,
 His cheek recovers soon its healthful hue,
 His eye relumines its extinguish'd fires,
 He walks, he leaps, he runs—is wing'd with joy,
 And riots in the sweets of ev'ry breeze
 He does not scorn it, who has long endured
 A fever's agonies, and fed on drugs
 Nor yet the mariner, his blood inflamed
 With acrid salts, his very heart athrurst
 To gaze at Nature in her green array
 Upon the ship's tall side he stands, possess'd
 With visions prompted by intense desire,
 Fair fields appear below, such as he left
 Far distant, such as he would die to find—
 He seeks them headlong, and is seen no more.

The spleen is seldom felt where Flora reigns;
 The low'ring eye, the petulance, the frown,
 And sullen sadness that o'ershade, distort,
 And mar the face of beauty, when no cause
 For such immeasurable woe appears,
 These Flora banishes, and gives the fair
 Sweet smiles, and bloom less transient than her own.
 It is the constant revolution, stale
 And tasteless, of the same repeated joys,
 That palls and satiates, and makes languid life
 A pedler's pack, that bows the bearer down
 Health suffers, and the spirits ebb, the heart
 Recoils from its own choice—at the full feast
 Is famish'd—finds no music in the song,
 No smartness in the jest, and wonders why
 Yet thousands still desire to journey on,
 Though halt and weary of the path they tread
 The paralytic, who can hold her cards
 But cannot play them, borrows a friend's hand
 To deal and shuffle, to divide and sort
 Her mingled suits and sequences, and sits
 Spectatress both and spectacle, a sad
 And silent cipher, while her proxy plays
 Others are dragg'd into the crowded room
 Between supporters, and once seated, sit
 Through downright inability to rise,
 Till the stout bearers lift the corpse again
 These speak a loud memento Yet ev'n these
 Themselves love life, and cling to it as he,
 That overhangs a torrent, to a twig
 They love it, and yet loathe it, fear to die,
 Yet scorn the purposes for which they live
 Then wherefore not renounce them? No—the dread,
 The slavish dread of solitude, that breeds
 Reflection and remorse, the fear of shame,
 And their invet'rate habits, all forbid

Whom call we gay? That honour has been long
 The boast of mere pretenders to the name
 The innocent are gay—the lark is gay,
 That dries his feathers saturate with dew
 Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams
 Of day-spring overshoot his humble nest
 The peasant too, a witness of his song,
 Himself a songster, is as gay as he
 But save me from the gaiety of those

Whose headaches nail them to a noonday bed,
 And save me, too, from theirs whose haggard eyes
 Flash desperation, and betray their pangs
 For property stripp'd off by cruel chance,
 From gaiety that fills the bones with pain,
 The mouth with blasphemy, the heart with woe.

The earth was made so various, that the mind
 Of desultory man, studious of change,
 And pleased with novelty, might be indulged
 Prospects however lovely may be seen
 Till half their beauties fade, the weary sight,
 Too well acquainted with their smiles, slides off
 Fastidious, seeking less familiar scenes
 Then snug enclosures in the shelter'd vale,
 Where frequent hedges intercept the eye,
 Delight us, happy to renounce a while,
 Not senseless of its charms, what still we love,
 That such short absence may endear it more
 Then forests, or the savage rock may please,
 That hides the sea-mew in his hollow clefts
 Above the reach of man his hoary head
 Conspicuous many a league, the mariner,
 Bound homeward, and in hope already there,
 Greets with three cheers exulting At his waist
 A girdle of half-wither'd shrubs he shows,
 And at his feet the baffled billows die
 The common¹ overgrown with fern, and rough
 With prickly gorse, that, shapeless and deform'd
 And dang'rous to the touch, has yet its bloom,
 And decks itself with ornaments of gold,
 Yields no unpleasing ramble, there the turf
 Smells fresh, and, rich in odorous herbs
 And fungous fruits of earth, regales the sense
 With luxury of unexpected sweets

There often wanders one, whom better days

¹ "I never answered your question concerning my strong partiality to a common. I well remember making the speech of which you remind me, and the very place where I made it was upon a common, in the neighbourhood of Southampton. My nostrils have hardly been regaled with those wild odours from that day to the present. We have no such here, but we have a scent in the fields about Olney that to me is equally agreeable: it proceeds, so far as I can find, neither from herb, nor tree, nor shrub; I should suppose therefore that it is in the soil. I had a strong desire to describe it when I was writing the Common scene in the Task, but feared lest the unfrequency of such a singular property in the earth should have tempted the reader to ascribe it to a fanciful note—at least to have suspected it for a deliberate fiction."—(To Lady Henleigh, Dec 6, 1785.)

Saw better clad, in cloak of *satin trimm'd*
 With lace, and hat with splendid ribbon bound.
 A serving-maid was she, and fell in love
 With one who left her, went to sea and died
 Her fancy follow'd him through foaming waves
 To distant shores, and she would sit and weep
 At what a sailor suffers, fancy too,
 Delusive most where warmest wishes are,
 Would oft anticipate his glad return,
 And dream of transports she was not to know.
 She heard the doleful tidings of his death,
 And never smiled again And now she roams
 The dreary waste, there spends the livelong day,
 And there, unless when charity forbids,
 The livelong night A tatter'd apron hides,
 Worn as a cloak, and hardly hides, a gown
 More tatter'd still, and both but ill conceal
 A bosom heaved with never-ceasing sighs
 She begs an idle pin of all she meets,
 And hoards them in her sleeve, but needful food,
 Though press'd with hunger oft, or comelier clothes,
 Though pinch'd with cold, asks never — Kate is crazed!¹

I see a column of slow-rising smoke
 O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild:
 A vagabond and useless tribe there eat
 Their miserable meal A kettle slung
 Between two poles upon a stick transverse,
 Receives the morsel, flesh obscene of dog,
 Or vermin, or, at best, of cock purloin'd
 From his accustom'd perch Hard-faring race!
 They pick their fuel out of ev'ry hedge,
 Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves unquench'd
 The spark of life The sportive wind blows wide
 Their flutt'ring rags, and shows a tawny skin,
 The vellum of the pedigree they claim
 Great skill have they in palmistry, and more
 To conjure clean away the gold they touch,
 Conveying worthless dross into its place,
 Loud when they beg, dumb only when they steal.
 Strange! that a creature rational, and cast

¹ "For two excellent prints, I return you my sincere acknowledgments I cannot say that poor Kate resembles much the original, who was neither so young nor so handsome as the pencil has represented her; but she was a figure well suited to the account given of her in the Task, and has a face exceedingly expressive of despairing melancholy" — (To Hill, May 24, 1738)

In human mould, should brutalize by choice
 His nature, and, though capable of arts
 By which the world might profit and himself,
 Self-banish'd from society, prefer
 Such squalid sloth to honourable toil
 Yet even these, though feigning sickness oft
 They swathe the forehead, drag the limping limb
 And vex their flesh with artificial sores,
 Can change their whine into a mirthful note
 When safe occasion offers, and with dance,
 And music of the bladder and the bag
 Beguile their woes, and make the woods resound.
 Such health and gaiety of heart enjoy
 The houseless rovers of the sylvan world,
 And breathing wholesome air, and wand'ring much,
 Need other physic none to heal th' effects
 Of loathsome diet, penury, and cold

Blest he, though undistinguish'd from the crowd
 By wealth or dignity, who dwells secure
 Where man, by nature fierce, has laid aside
 His fierceness, having learnt, though slow to learn.
 The manners and the arts of civil life
 His wants, indeed, are many, but supply
 Is obvious, placed within the easy reach
 Of temperate wishes and industrious hands
 Here virtue thrives as in her proper soil,
 Not rude and surly, and beset with thorns,
 And terrible to sight, as when she springs
 (If e'er she spring spontaneous) in remote
 And barb'rous climes, where violence prevails,
 And strength is lord of all, but gentle, kind,
 By culture tamed, by liberty refresh'd,
 And all her fruits by radiant truth matured
 War and the chase engross the savage whole;
 War follow'd for revenge, or to supplant
 The envied tenants of some happier spot,
 The chase for sustenance, precarious trust!
 His hard condition with severe constraint
 Binds all his faculties, forbids all growth
 Of wisdom, proves a school in which he learns
 Sly circumvention, unrelenting hate,
 Mean self-attachment, and scarce aught beside.
 Thus fare the shiv'ring natives of the north,
 And thus the rangers of the western world,
 Where it advances far into the deep,

Towards th' Antarctic Ev'n the favour'd isles,¹
 So lately found, although the constant sun
 Cheer all their seasons with a grateful smile,
 Can boast but little virtue, and inert
 Through plenty, lose in morals, what they gain
 In manners, victims of luxurious ease
 These therefore I can pity, placed remote
 From all that science traces, art invents,
 Or inspiration teaches, and enclosed
 In boundless oceans, never to be pass'd
 By navigators uninform'd as they,
 Or plough'd perhaps by British bark again
 But far beyond the rest, and with most cause
 Thee, gentle savage!² whom no love of thee
 Or thine, but curiosity perhaps,
 Or else vain-glory, prompted us to draw
 Forth from thy native bow'rs, to show thee here
 With what superior skill we can abuse
 The gifts of Providence, and squander life
 The dream is past And thou hast found again
 Thy cocoas and bananas, palms and yams,
 And homestall thatch'd with leaves But hast thou found
 Their former charms? And, having seen our state,
 Our palaces, our ladies, and our pomp
 Of equipage, our gardens, and our sports,
 And heard our music, are thy simple friends,
 Thy simple fare, and all thy plain delights
 As dear to thee as once? And have thy joys
 Lost nothing by comparison with ours?
 Rude as thou art (for we return'd thee rude
 And ignorant, except of outward show)
 I cannot think thee yet so dull of heart
 And spiritless, as never to regret
 Sweets tasted here, and left as soon as known.
 Methinks I see thee straying on the beach,
 And asking of the surge that bathes thy feet
 If ever it has wash'd our distant shore
 I see thee weep, and thine are honest tears,
 A patriot's for his country Thou art sad
 At thought of her forlorn and abject state,
 From which no power of thine can raise her up
 Thus fancy paints thee, and, though apt to err,
 Perhaps errs little when she paints thee thus.
 She tells me too that duly ev'ry morn

¹ The South Sea.² Omwi.

Thou clumb'st the mountain top, with eager eye
 Exploring far and wide the wat'ry waste,
 For sight of ship from England Ev'ry speck,
 Seen in the dim horizon, turns thee pale
 With conflict of contending hopes and fears
 But comes at last the dull and dusky eve,
 And sends thee to thy cabin, well prepared
 To dream all night of what the day denied.
 Alas! expect it not We found no bait
 To tempt us in thy country Doing good,
 Disinterested good, is not our trade
 We travel far, 'tis true, but not for nought,
 And must be bribed to compass earth again
 By other hopes, and richer fruits than yours¹

But though true worth and virtue, in the mild
 And genial soil of cultivated life
 Thrive most, and may perhaps thrive only there,
 Yet not in cities oft In proud and gay
 And gain-devoted cities, thither flow,
 As to a common and most noisome sewer,
 The dregs and feculence of ev'ry land
 In cities, foul example on most minds
 Begets its likeness Rank abundance breeds
 In gross and pamper'd cities sloth and lust,
 And wantonness and gluttonous excess
 In cities, vice is ludden with most ease,
 Or seen with least reproach, and virtue, taught
 By frequent lapse, can hope no triumph there,
 Beyond th' achievement of successful flight
 I do confess them nurs'ries of the arts,
 In which they flourish most, where, in the beams
 Of warm encouragement, and in the eye
 Of public note, they reach their perfect size
 Such London is, by taste and wealth proclaim'd
 The fairest capital in all the world,
 By riot and incontinence the worst
 There, touch'd by Reynolds, a dull blank becomes
 A lucid mirror in which nature sees
 All her reflected features Bacon there

¹ Cowper writes to Newton (October 6, 1783) — "Discoveries have been made but such discoveries as will hardly satisfy the expense of such undertakings We brought away an Indian, and having debauched him, we sent him home again, to communicate the infection to his country; — fine sport, to be sure, but such as will not defray the cost. Nations that live upon bread fruit and have no mines to make them worthy of our acquaintance, will be but little visited for the future."

Gives more than female beauty to a stone,¹
 And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips
 Nor does the chisel occupy alone
 The pow'rs of sculpture, but the style as much;
 Each province of her art her equal care
 With nice incision of her guided steel
 She ploughs a brazen field, and clothes a soil
 So sterile with what charms soe'er she will,
 The richest scen'ry and the loveliest forms
 Where finds philosophy her eagle eye,
 With which she gazes at yon burning disk
 Undazzled, and detects and counts his spots?
 In London Where her implements exact,
 With which she calculates, computes, and scans
 All distance, motion, magnitude, and now
 Measures an atom, and now girds a world?
 In London Where has commerce such a mart,
 So rich, so throng'd, so drain'd, and so supplied,
 As London, opulent, enlarged, and still
 Increasing London? Babylon of old
 Not more the glory of the earth, than she
 A more accomplish'd world's chief glory now

She has her praise New mark a spot or two
 That so much beauty would do well to purge,
 And show this queen of cities, that so fair
 May yet be foul, so witty, yet not wise
 It is not seemly, nor of good report,
 That she is slack in discipline, more prompt
 T' avenge than to prevent the breach of law:
 That she is rigid in denouncing death
 On petty robbers, and indulges life
 And liberty, and oftentimes honour too,
 To speculators of the public gold
 That thieves at home must hang, but he, that puts
 Into his overgorged and bloated purse
 The wealth of Indian provinces, escapes
 Nor is it well, nor can it come to good,
 That through profane and infidel contempt
 Of holy writ, she has presumed t' annul
 And abrogate, as roundly as she may,
 The total ordinance and will of God,

¹ The allusion, I suppose, is to the figure of "Commerce," in the monument to Lord Chatham. In a letter to Newton (October 22, 1783), he calls it "a perfect beauty," and adds, "It is a literal truth, that I felt the tears flush into my eyes while I looked at her."

Advancing fashion to the post of truth,
 And centring all authority in modes
 And customs of her own, till Sabbath rites
 Have dwindled into unrespected forms,
 And knees and hassocks are wellnigh divorced

God made the country, and man made the town.
 What wonder, then, that health and virtue, gifts
 That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
 That life holds out to all, should most abound
 And least be threatened in the fields and groves ?
 Possess ye therefore, ye who, borne about
 In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
 But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
 But such as art contrives, possess ye still
 Your element, there only ye can shine,
 There only minds like yours can do no harm.
 Our groves were planted to console at noon
 The pensive wand'rer in their shades At eve
 The moonbeam, sliding softly in between
 The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
 Birds warbling all the music We can spare
 The splendour of your lamps, they but eclipse
 Our softer satellite Your songs confound
 Our more harmonious notes The thrush departs
 Scared, and th' offended nightingale is mute
 There is a public mischief in your mirth,
 It plagues your country Folly such as yours,
 Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
 Has made, which enemies could ne'er have done,
 Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,
 A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

BOOK II.

THE TIMEPIECE.

ARGUMENT.

Reflections suggested by the conclusion of the former book—Peace among the nations recommended on the ground of their common fellowship in sorrow—Prodigies enumerated—Sicilian earthquakes—Man rendered obnoxious to these calamities by sin—God the agent in them—The philosophy that stops at secondary causes, reproved—Our own late miscarriages accounted for—Satirical notice taken of our trips to Fontainebleau—But the pulpit, not satire, the proper engine of reformation—The reverend advertiser of engraved sermons—Petit-maitre parson—The good preacher—Picture of a theatrical clerical coxcomb—Story tellers and jesters in the pulpit reproved—Apostrophe to popular applause—Retailers of ancient philosophy expostulated with—Sum of the whole matter—Effects of sacerdotal mismanagement on the laity—Their folly and extravagance—The mischiefs of profusion—Profusion itself, with all its consequent evils, ascribed, as to its principal cause, to the want of discipline in the Universities.

Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,¹
 Some boundless contiguity of shade,
 Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
 Of unsuccessful or successful war
 Might never reach me more! My ear is pain'd,
 My soul is sick with ev'ry day's report
 Of wrong and outrage with which earth is fill'd.
 There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
 It does not feel for man. The nat'ral bond
 Of brotherhood is sever'd as the flax,
 That falls asunder at the touch of fire²
 He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
 Not colour'd like his own, and having pow'r
 To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause
 Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey
 Lands intersected by a narrow frith
 Abhor each other Mountains interposed

¹ "The Timepiece appears to me to have a degree of propriety beyond most of them. The book to which it belongs is intended to strike the hour that gives notice of approaching judgment, and dealing pretty largely in the signs of the times, seems to be denominated, as it is, with a sufficient degree of accommodation to the subject"—(To Newton, Dec 13, 1784)

² Jeremiah ix 2

Make enemies of nations, who had else
 Like kindred drops been mingled into one
 Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys;
 And worse than all, and most to be deplored,
 As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
 Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
 With stripes, that mercy, with a bleeding heart,
 Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast
 Then what is man? And what man, seeing this,
 And having human feelings, does not blush
 And hang his head, to think himself a man?
 I would not have a slave to till my ground,
 To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
 And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
 That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd
 No dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
 Just estimation prized above all price,
 I had much rather be myself the slave
 And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him
 We have no slaves at home—then why abroad?
 And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
 That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.
 Slaves cannot breathe in England, if their lungs
 Receive our air, that moment they are free,
 They touch our country and their shackles fall
 That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
 And jealous of the blessing Spread it then,
 And let it circulate through ev'ry vein
 Of all your empire, that where Britain's power
 Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too

Sure there is need of social intercurso,
 Benevolence and peace and mutual aid
 Between the nations, in a world that seems
 To toll the death bell to its own decease,
 And by the voice of all its elements
 To preach the gen'ral doom¹ When were the winds
 Let slip with such a warrant to destroy?
 When did the waves so haughtily o'erleap
 Their ancient barriers, deluging the dry?
 Fires from beneath, and meteors² from above,
 Portentous, unexampled, unexplain'd,
 Have kindled beacons in the skies, and th' old

¹ Alluding to the late calamities at Jamaica.—O.
² August 18, 1783.—O.

And crazy earth has had her shaking fits
 More frequent, and foregone her usual rest.
 Is it a time to wrangle, when the props
 And pillars of our planet seem to fail,
 And Nature¹ with a dim and sickly eye
 To wait the close of all? But grant her end
 More distant, and that prophecy demands
 A longer respite, unaccomplish'd yet,
 Still they are frowning signals, and bespeak
 Displeasure in his breast who smites the earth
 Or heals it, makes it languish or rejoice
 And 'tis but seemly, that, where all deserve
 And stand exposed by common peccancy
 To what no few have felt, there should be peace,
 And brethren in calamity should love

Alas for Sicily!² rude fragments now
 Lie scatter'd where the shapely column stood
 Her palaces are dust In all her streets
 The voice of singing and the sprightly chord
 Are silent Revelry and dance and show
 Suffer a syncope and solemn pause,
 While God performs, upon the trembling stage
 Of his own works, his dreadful part alone
 How does the earth receive him?—With what signs
 Of gratulation and delight, her king?
 Pours she not all her choicest fruits abroad,
 Her sweetest flow'rs, her aromatic gums,
 Disclosing paradise where'er he treads?
 She quakes at his approach Her hollow womb,
 Conceiving thunders, through a thousand deeps
 And fiery caverns roars beneath his foot
 The hills move lightly and the mountains smoke,
 For he has touch'd them From th' extremest point
 Of elevation down into th' abyss,
 His wrath is busy and his frown is felt
 The rocks fall headlong and the valleys rise,
 The rivers die into offensive pools,
 And, charged with putrid verdure, breathe a gross
 And mortal nuisance into all the air
 What solid was, by transformation strange
 Grows fluid, and the fixt and rooted earth

¹ Alluding to the fog that covered both Europe and Asia during the whole summer of 1783 —O

² The earthquake which destroyed the city of Messina in 1782

Tormented into billows heaves and swells,
 Or with vortiginous and hideous whirl
 Sucks down its prey insatiable Immense
 The tumult and the overthrow, the pangs
 And agonies of human and of brute
 Multitudes, fugitive on ev'ry side,
 And fugitive in vain The sylvan scene
 Migrates uplifted, and, with all its soul
 Alighting in far distant fields, finds out
 A new possessor, and survives the change
 Ocean has caught the frenzy, and upwrought
 To an enormous and o'erbearing height,
 Not by a mighty wind, but by that voice
 Which winds and waves obey, invades the shore
 Resistless Never such a sudden flood,
 Upridged so high, and sent on such a charge,
 Possess'd an inland scene Where now the throng
 That press'd the beach and hasty to depart
 Look'd to the sea for safety? They are gone,
 Gone with the reflux wave into the deep,
 A prince with half his people Ancient tow'rs,
 And roofs embattled high, the gloomy scenes
 Where beauty oft and letter'd worth consume
 Life in the unproductive shades of death,
 Fall prone, the pale inhabitants come forth,
 And, happy in their unforeseen release
 From all the rigours of restraint, enjoy
 The terrors of the day that sets them free
 Who then, that has thee, would not hold thee fast,
 Freedom! whom they that lose thee so regret,
 That ev'n a judgment, making way for thee,
 Seems in their eyes a mercy, for thy sake

Such evil sin hath wrought, and such a flame
 Kindled in heaven, that it burns down to earth,
 And, in the furious inquest that it makes—
 On God's behalf, lays waste his fairest works
 The very elements, though each be meant
 The minister of man, to serve his wants,
 Conspire against him With his breath he draws
 A plague into his blood, and cannot use
 Life's necessary means, but he must die
 Storms rise t' o'erwhelm him or, if stormy winds
 Rise not, the waters of the deep shall rise,
 And, needing none assistance of the storm,
 Shall roll themselves ashore, and reach him there.

The earth shall shak' him out of all his holds,
 Or make his house his grave; nor so content,
 Shall counteract the motions of the flood,
 And drown him in her dry and dusty gulfs
 What then—were they the wick'ed above all,
 And we the righteous whose first anchor'd isle
 Moved not, while theirs was rock'd like a light skiff,
 The sport of every wave? No none are clear
 And none than we more guilty But where all
 Stand chargeable with guilt and to the shifts
 Of wrath obnoxious God may choose his mark,
 May punish if he please, the less, to warn
 The more malignant If he spared not them,
 Tremble and be alarmed at thine escape,
 Far guilt'er I depend, lest he spare not thee!

Happy the man who sees a God employ'd
 In all the good and all that chequer life!
 Resolving all events, with their effects
 And manifold results into the will
 And arbitrating wise of the Supreme
 Had not his eye rule all things, and intend
 The least of our concerns (since from the least
 The greatest oft originate) could chance
 I and place in his dominion, or dispose
 One lawless particle to thwart his plan,
 Then God might be surprised, and unforeseen
 Contingence might alarm him, and disturb
 The smooth and equal course of his affairs
 The truth philosophy, though eagle eyed
 In nature's tendencies, oft overlooks,
 And, having found his instrument, forgets
 Or disregards, or more presumptuous still
 Denies the pow'r that wields it God proclaims
 His hot displeasure against foolish men
 That live an atheist life involves the heav'n
 In tempests quits his grasp upon the winds
 And gives them all their fury, bids a plague
 Kindle a fiery boil upon the skin,
 And putrefy the branth of blooming health
 He calls for famine, and the meagre fiend
 Blows mildew from between his shrivel'd lips,
 And taunts the golden ear He springs his mines,
 And desolates a nation at a blast
 Forth steps the spruce philosopher, and tells
 Of homogene' and discordant springs

And principles, of causes how they work
 By necessary laws their sure effects,
 Of action and reaction He has found
 The source of the disease that nature feels,
 And bids the world take heart and banish fear
 Thou fool! will thy discovery of the cause
 Suspend th' effect, or heal it? Has not God
 Still wrought by means since first he made the world,
 And did he not of old employ his means
 To drown it? What is his creation less
 Than a capacious reservoir of means
 Form'd for his use, and ready at his will?
 Go, dress thine eyes with eye salve, ask of him
 Or ask of whomsoever he has taught,
 And learn, though late, the genuine cause of all

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
 My country! and while yet a nook is left,
 Where English minds and manners may be found,
 Shall be constrain'd to love thee Though thy clime
 Be fickle, and thy year most part deform'd
 With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost,
 I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies
 And fields without a flower, for warmer France
 With all her vines, nor for Ausonia's groves
 Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bow'rs
 To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
 Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
 Upon thy foes, was never meant my task,
 But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
 Thy joys and sorrows with as true a heart
 As any thund'rer there And I can feel
 Thy follies too, and with a just disdain
 Frown at effeminate, whose very looks
 Reflect dishonour on the land I love
 How, in the name of soldiership and sense,
 Should England prosper, when such things, as smooth
 And tender as a girl, all essenced o'er
 With odours, and as profligate as sweet,
 Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,
 And love when they should fight, when such as
 these
 Presume to lay their hand upon the ark
 Of her magnificent and awful cause?
 Time was when it was praise and boast enough
 In ev'ry clime, and travel where we might,
 That we were born her children. Praise enough

To fill th' ambition of a private man,
 That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
 And Wolfe's great unne compatriot with his own.
 Farewell those honours and farewell with them
 The hope of such hereafter They have fall'n
 Each in his field of glory, one in arms,
 And one in council.—Wolfe upon the lap
 Of smiling victory that moment won,
 And Chatham, heart-sick of his country's shame,¹
 They made us many soldiers, Chatham, still
 Consulting England's happiness at home,
 Secured it by an unforgiving frown
 If any wrong'd her Wolfe, where'er he fought,
 Put so much of his heart into his act,
 That his example had a magnet's force,
 And all were swift to follow whom all loved
 Those suns are set Oh rise some other such
 Or all that we have left is empty talk
 Of old achievements, and despair of new

Now hoist the sail, and let the streamers float
 Upon the wanton breezes Strew the deck
 With lavender, and sprinkle liquid sweets,
 That no rude savour maritime invade
 The nose of nice nobility Breathe soft
 Ye chorizonts, and softer still ye flutes,
 That winds and waters lull'd by magic sounds
 May bear us smoothly to the Gallic shore
 True, we have lost an empire—let it pass.
 True, we may thank the perfidy of France
 That pick'd the jewel out of England's crown,
 With all the cunning of an envious shrew
 And let that pass—'twas but a trick of state.
 A brave man knows no malice, but at once
 Forgets in peace the injuries of war,
 And gives his direst foe a friend's embrace
 And shamed as we have been, to th' very beard
 Braved and defied, and in our own sea proved
 Too weak for those decisive blows, that once
 Insured us mastery there, we yet retain
 Some small pre eminence, we justly boast
 At least superior jockeyship, and claim
 The honours of the turf as all our own
 Go then, well worthy of the praise ye seek,

¹ Wolfe died Sept. 13. 1759; Chatham, May 14, 1778; not many weeks after his speech on America in the House of Lords

And show the shame ye might conceal at home,
 In foreign eyes !—be grooms, and win the plate,
 Where once your nobler fathers won a crown !—
 'Tis gen'rous to communicate your skill
 To those that need it Folly is soon learn'd,
 And, under such preceptors, who can fail?

There is a pleasure in poetic pains
 Which only poets know The shifts and turns,
 Th' expedients and inventions multiform
 To which the mind resorts, in chase of terms
 Though apt, yet coy, and difficult to win—
 T' arrest the fleeting images that fill
 The mirror of the mind, and hold them fast,
 And force them sit, till he has pencil'd off
 A faithful likeness of the forms he views,
 Then to dispose his copies with such art
 That each may find its most propitious light,
 And shine by situation, hardly less
 Than by the labour and the skill it cost,
 Are occupations of the poet's mind
 So pleasing, and that steal away the thought
 With such address from themes of sad import,
 That, lost in his own musings, happy man !
 He feels th' anxieties of life, denied
 Their wonted entertainment, all retire
 Such joys has he that sings But ah ! not such,
 Or seldom such, the hearers of his song
 Fastidious, or else listless, or perhaps
 Aware of nothing arduous in a task
 They never undertook, they little note
 His dangers or escapes, and haply find
 There least amusement where he found the most
 But is amusement all ? studious of song,
 And yet ambitious not to sing in vain,
 I would not trifle merely, though the world
 Be loudest in their praise who do no more
 Yet what can satire, whether grave or gay ?
 It may correct a foible, may chastise
 The freaks of fashion, regulate the dress,
 Retrench a sword-blade, or displace a patch,
 But where are its sublimer trophies found ?
 What vice has it subdued ? whose heart reclaim'd
 By rigour, or whom laugh'd into reform ?
 Alas ! Leviathan is not so tamed
 Laugh'd at, he laughs again, and, stricken hard,

Turns to the stroke his adamantine scales,
That fear no discipline of human hands

The pulpit therefore (and I name it, fill'd
With solemn awe, that bids me well beware
With what intent I touch that holy thing)—
The pulpit (when the sat'rist has at last,
Strutting and vap'ring in an empty school,
Spent all his force, and made no proselyte)—
I say the pulpit (in the sober use
Of its legitimate peculiar pow'rs)
Must stand acknowledg'd, while the world shall stand.
The most important and effectual guard,
Support and ornament of virtue's cause
There stands the messenger of truth there stands
The legate of the skies, his theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.
By him, the violated law speaks out
Its thunders, and by him, in strains as sweet
As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace
He establishes the strong, restores the weak,
Reclaims the wand'rer, binds the broken heart,
And, arm'd himself in panoply complete
Of heav'nly temper, furnishes with arms
Bright as his own, and trains, by ev'ry rule
Of holy discipline, to glorious war,
The sacramental host of God's elect
Are all such teachers? would to heav'n all were!
But hark—the Doctor's voice—fast wedged between
Two empires he stands, and with swoln cheeks
Inspires the news, his trumpet Keener far
Than all invective is his bold harangue,
While through that public organ of report
He hails the clergy, and, defying shame,
Announces to the world his own and theirs
He teaches those to read, whom schools dismiss'd,
And colleges, untaught, sells accent, tone,
And emphasis in score, and gives to pray'r
Th' *adagio* and *andante* it demands
He grinds divinity of other days
Down into modern use, transforms old print
To zigzag manuscript, and cheats the eyes
Of gall'ry critics by a thousand arts—
Are there who purchase of the Doctor's ware?
Oh name it not in Gath!—it cannot be,
That grave and learned Clerks should need such aid.

He doubtless is in sport, and does but droll,
Assuming thus a rank unknown before,
Grand caterer and dry-nurse of the church.

I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,
Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause
To such I render more than mere respect,
Whose actions say that they respect themselves
But, loose in morals, and in manners vain,
In conversation frivolous, in dress
Extreme, at once rapacious and profuse,
Frequent in park with lady at his side,
Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes,
But rare at home, and never at his books
Or with his pen, save when he scrawls a card,
Constant at routs, familiar with a round
Of ladyships, a stranger to the poor,
Ambitious of preferment for its gold,
And well prepared by ignorance and sloth,
By infidelity and love o' th' world
To make God's work a sinecure, a slave
To his own pleasures and his patron's pride —
From such apostles, O ye mitred heads,
Preserve the church! and lay not careless hands
On skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn.

Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me I would trace
His master strokes, and draw from his design
I would express him simple, grave, sincere,
In doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain,
And plain in manner, decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture, much impress'd
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too, affectionate in look
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men
Behold the picture! — Is it like? — Like whom?
The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
And then skip down again, pronounce a text,
Cry — Hcm, and reading what they never wrote,
Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
And with a well bred whisper close the scene

In man or woman, but far most in man,
And most of all in man that ministers
And serves the altar, in my soul I loathe
All affectation 'Tis my perfect scorn,
Object of my implacable disgust
What!—will a man play tricks, will he indulge
A silly fond conceit of his fair form
And just proportion, fashionable mien,
And pretty face, in presence of his God?
Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes,
As with the di'mond on his lily hand,
And play his brilliant parts before my eyes,
When I am hungry for the bread of life?
He mocks his Maker, prostitutes and shames
His noble office, and, instead of truth,
Displaying his own beauty, starves his flock!
Therefore, avaunt! all attitude and stare
And start theatric, practised at the glass
I seek divine simplicity in him
Who handles things divine, and all beside,
Though learn'd with labour, and though much admired
By curious eyes and judgments ill-inform'd,
To me is odious as the nasal twang
Heard at conventicle, where worthy men,
Misled by custom, strain celestial themes
Through the prest nostril, spectacle-bestrid
Some, decent in demeanour while they preach,
That task perform'd, relapse into themselves,
And having spoken wisely, at the close
Grow wanton, and give proof to ev'ry eye—
Whoe'er was edified themselves were not
Forth comes the pocket mirror First we stroke
An eyebrow, next compose a straggling lock,
Then with an air, most gracefully perform'd,
Fall back into our seat, extend an arm,
And lay it at its case with gentle care,
With handkerchief in hand, depending low
The better hand, more busy, gives the nose
Its bergamot, or aids th' indebted eye
With op'ra glass to watch the moving scene,
And recognise the slow-retiring fair
Now this is fulsome, and offends me more
Than in a churchman slovenly neglect
And rustic coarseness would A heav'nly mind
May be indiff'rent to her house of clay,
And slight the hovel as beneath her care.

But how a body so fantastic, trim,
And quaint in its deportment and attire,
Can lodge a heav'nly mind—demands a doubt.

He that negotiates between God and man,
As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;
To break a jest, when pity would inspire
Pathetic exhortation, and t' address
The skittish fancy with facetious tales,
When sent with God's commission to the heart.
So did not Paul Direct me to a quip
Or merry turn in all he ever wrote,
And I consent you take it for your text,
Your only one, till sides and benches fail.
No he was serious in a serious cause,
And understood too well the weighty terms
That he had ta'en in charge He would not stoop
To conquer those by jocular exploits,
Whom truth and soberness assaul'd in vain.

Oh, popular applause! what heart of man
Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms?
The wisest and the best feel urgent need
Of all their caution in thy gentlest gales,
But swell'd into a gust—who then, alas!
With all his canvas set, and unexpert,
And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power?
Praise from the rival'd lips of toothless, bald
Decrepitude, and in the looks of lean
And craving poverty, and in the bow
Respectful of the smutch'd artificer,
Is oft too welcome, and may much disturb
The bias of the purpose How much more,
Pour'd forth by beauty splendid and polite,
In language soft as adoration breathes?
Ah spare your idol! think him human still,
Charms he may have, but he has frailties too,
Dote not too much, nor spoil what ye admire

All truth is from the sempiternal source
Of light'd vine. But P'gypt, Greece, and Rome
Draw from the stream below More favour'd, we
Drink, when we choose it, at the fountain head.

To them it flow'd much mingled and defiled
 With hurtful error, prejudice, and dreams
 Illusive of philosophy, so call'd,
 But falsely Sages after sages strove,
 In vain, to filter off a crystal draught
 Pure from the lees, which often more enhanced
 The thirst than slaked it, and not seldom bred
 Intoxication and delirium wild.
 In vain they push'd inquiry to the birth
 And spring-time of the world, ask'd, Whence is man?
 Why form'd at all? and wherefore as he is?
 Where must he find his Maker? With what rites
 Adore him? Will he hear, accept, and bless?
 Or does he sit regardless of his works?
 Has man within him an immortal seed?
 Or does the tomb take all? If he survive
 His ashes, where? and in what weal or woe?
 Knots worthy of solution, which alone
 A Deity could solve Their answers vague,
 And all at random, fabulous and dark,
 Left them as dark themselves Their rules of life,
 Defective and unsanction'd, proved too weak
 To bind the roving appetite, and lead
 Blind nature to a God not yet reveal'd
 'Tis Revelation satisfies all doubts,
 Explains all mysteries, except her own,
 And so illuminates the path of life,
 That fools discover it, and stray no more
 Now tell me, dignified and sapient sir,
 My man of morals, nurtured in the shades
 Of Academus, is this false or true?
 Is Christ the abler teacher, or the schools?
 If Christ, then why resort at ev'ry turn
 To Athens, or to Rome, for wisdom short
 Of man's occasions, when in him reside
 Grace, knowledge, comfort, an unfathom'd store?
 How oft when Paul has served us with a text,
 Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully, preach'd!
 Men that, if now alive, would sit content
 And humble learners of a Saviour's worth,
 Preach it who might Such was their love of truth,
 Their thirst of knowledge, and their ear dour too.

And thus it is The pastor, either vain
 By nature, or by flattery made so, taught
 To gaze at his own splendour, and t' exalt

Absurdly, not his office, but himself;
 Or unenlighten'd, and too proud to learn,
 Or vicious, and not therefore apt to teach,
 Perverting often, by the stress of lewd
 And loose example, whom he should instruct,
 Exposes and holds up to broad disgrace
 The noblest function, and discredits much
 The brightest truths that man has ever seen.
 For ghostly counsel, if it either fall
 Below the exigence, or be not back'd
 With show of love, at least with hopeful proof
 Of some sincerity on the giver's part,
 Or be dishonour'd in th' exterior form
 And mode of its conveyance, by such tricks
 As move derision, or by foppish airs
 And histrionic mumm'ry, that let down
 The pulpit to the level of the stage,
 Drops from the lips a disregarded thing
 The weak perhaps are moved, but are not taught.
 While prejudice in men of stronger minds
 Takes deeper root, confirm'd by what they see.
 A relaxation of religion's hold
 Upon the roving and untutor'd heart
 Soon follows, and the curb of conscience snapt,
 The lazy run wild — But do they now?
 Note their extravagance, and be convinced.

As nations, ignorant of God, contrive
 A wooden one, so we, no longer taught
 By monitors that mother church supplies,
 Now make our own Posterity will ask
 (If e'er posterity sees verse of mine),
 Some fifty or a hundred lustrums hence,
 What was a monitor in George's days?
 My very gentle reader, yet unborn,
 Of whom I needs must augur better things,
 Since Heav'n would sure grow weary of a world
 Productive only of a race like us,
 A monitor is wood—plank shaven thin
 We wear it at our backs There, closely braced
 And neatly fitted, it compresses hard
 The prominent and most unsightly bones,
 And binds the shoulders flat We prove its use
 Sov'reign and most effectual to secure
 A form, not now gymnastic as of yore,
 From rickets and distortion, else, our lot.

But thus admonish'd we can walk erect,
 One proof at least of manhood, while the friend
 Sticks close, a Mentor worthy of his charge
 Our habits costlier than Lucullus wore,
 And, by caprice as multiplied as his,
 Just please us while the fashion is at full,
 But change with ev'ry moon The sycophant,
 That¹ waits to dress us, arbitrates their date,
 Surveys his fair reversion with keen eye,
 Finds one ill made, another obsolete,
 This fits not nicely, that is ill conceived,
 And, making prize of all that he condemns,
 With our expenditure defrays his own.
 Variety's the very spice of life,
 That gives it all its flavour We have run
 Through ev'ry change that fancy, at the loom
 Exhausted, has had genius to supply,
 And, studious of mutation still, discard
 A real elegance, a little used,
 For monstrous novelty and strange disguise
 We sacrifice to dress, till household joys
 And comforts cease Dress drains our cellar dry,
 And keeps our larder lean, puts out our fires,
 And introduces hunger, frost, and woe,
 Where peace and hospitality might reign
 What man that lives, and that knows how to live,
 Would fail t' exhibit at the public shows
 A form as splendid as the proudest there,
 Though appetite raise outcries at the cost?
 A man o' th' town dines late, but soon enough
 With reasonable forecast and despatch,
 T' ensure a side-box station at half-price
 You think, perhaps, so delicate his dress,
 His daily fare as delicate Alas!
 He picks clean teeth, and, busy as he seems
 With an old tavern quill, is hungry yet
 The rout is folly's circle which she draws
 With magic wand So potent is the spell,

1 "This last sentence puts me in mind of your reference to Blair, in a former letter, whom you there permitted to be your arbiter, to adjust the respective claims of *who* or *that* Upon solemn occasions—as in prayer or preaching, for instance—I would be strictly correct, and upon stately ones—for instance, were I writing an epic poem—I would be so likewise; but not upon familiar occasions God, *who* heareth prayer, is right Hector, *who* slew Patroclus, is right And the man *that* dresses me every day, is, in my mind, right also, because the contrary would give an air of stiffness and pedantry to an expression that, in respect of the matter of it, cannot be too negligently made up"—(To Unwin, August 27, 1785)

That none decoy'd into that fatal ring,
 Unless by Heaven's peculiar grace, escape
 There we grow early gray, but never wise,
 There form connexions, and acquire no friend;
 Solicit pleasure hopeless of success,
 Waste youth in occupations only fit
 For second childhood, and devote old age
 To sports which only childhood could excuse.
 There they are happiest who dissemble best
 Their weariness, and they the most polite,
 Who squander time and treasure with a smile,
 Though at their own destruction. She that asks
 Her dear five hundred friends, contemns them all,
 And hates their coming. They (what can they less?)
 Make just reprisals, and, with cringe and shrug
 And bow obsequious, hide their hate of her
 All catch the frenzy, downward from her Grace,
 Whose flambeaux flash against the morning skies,
 And gild our chamber ceilings as they pass,
 To her who, frugal only that her thrift,
 May feed excesses she can ill afford,
 Is hackney'd home unlackey'd, who, in haste
 Alighting, turns the key in her own door,
 And, at the watchman's lantern borrowing light,
 Finds a cold bed her only comfort left
 Wives beggar husbands, husbands starve their wives,
 On fortune's velvet altar offering up
 Their last poor pittance—Fortune, most severe
 Of goddesses yet known, and costlier far
 Than all that held their routs in Juno's heav'n—
 So fare we in this prison house the world
 And 'tis a fearful spectacle to see
 So many maniacs dancing in their chains
 They gaze upon the links that hold them fast
 With eyes of anguish, execrate their lot,
 Then shake them in despair, and dance again

Now basket up the family of plagues
 That waste our vitals. Peculation, sale
 Of honour, perjury, corruption, frauds
 By forgery, by subterfuge of law,
 By tricks and lies, as num'rous and as keen
 As the necessities their authors feel,
 Then cast them, closely bundled, ev'ry brat
 At the right door. Profusion is its sire
 Profusion unrestrain'd, with all that's base

In character, has litter'd all the land,
 And bred within the mem'ry of no few
 A priesthood such as Baal's was of old,
 A people such as never was till now
 It is a hungry vice —it eats up all
 That gives society its beauty, strength,
 Convenience, and security, and use,
 Makes men mere vermin, worthy to be trapp'd
 And gibbeted, as fast as catchpole claws
 Can seize the slipp'ry prey, unties the knot
 Of union, and converts the sacred band
 That holds mankind together to a scourge.
 Profusion, deluging a state with lusts
 Of grossest nature and of worst effects,
 Prepares it for its ruin, hardens, blinds,
 And warps the consciences of public men
 Till they can laugh at virtue, mock the fools
 That trust them, and, in th' end, disclose a face
 That would have shock'd credulity herself,
 Unmask'd, vouchsafing thus their sole excuse, —
 Since all alike are selfish, why not they?
 This does Profusion, and th' accursed cause
 Of such deep mischief has itself a cause

In colleges and halls, in ancient days,
 When learning, virtue, piety, and truth
 Were precious, and inculcated with care,
 There dwelt a sage call'd Discipline His head,
 Not yet by time completely silver'd o'er,
 Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,
 But strong for service still, and unimpair'd
 His eye was meek and gentle, and a smile
 Play'd on his lips, and in his speech was heard
 Paternal sweetness, dignity, and love.
 The occupation dearest to his heart
 Was to encourage goodness He would stroke
 The head of modest and ingenuous worth
 That blush'd at its own praise, and press the youth
 Close to his side that pleased him Learning grew
 Beneath his care, a thriving, vig'rous plant,
 The mind was well inform'd, the passions held
 Subordinate, and diligence was choice
 If e'er it chanced, as sometimes chance it must,
 That one among so many overleap'd
 The limits of control, his gentle eye
 Grew stern, and darted a severe rebuke;

His frown was full of terror, and his voice
 Shook the delinquent with such fits of awe
 As left him not, till penitence had won
 Lost favour back again, and closed the breach.
 But Discipline, a faithful servant long,
 Declined at length into the vale of years,
 A palsy struck his arm, his sparkling eye
 Was quench'd in rheums of age, his voice unstrung
 Grew tremulous, and moved derision more
 Than rev'rence in perverse, rebellious youth
 So colleges and halls neglected much
 Their good old friend, and Discipline at length,
 O'erlook'd and unemploy'd, fell sick and died
 Then study languish'd, emulation slept,
 And virtue fled The schools became a scene
 Of solemn farce, where ignorance in stilt,
 His cap well lined with logic not his own,
 With parrot tongue perform'd the scholar's part,
 Proceeding soon a graduated dunce
 Then compromise had place, and scrutiny
 Became stone blind, precedence went in truck,
 And he was competent whose purse was so
 A dissolution of all bonds ensued,
 The curbs invented for the mulish mouth
 Of headstrong youth were broken, bars and bolts
 Grew rusty by disuse, and massey gates
 Forgot their office, op'ning with a touch;
 Till gowns at length are found mere masquerade,
 The tassell'd cap and the spruce band a jest,
 A mock'ry of the world What need of these
 For gamesters, jockeys, brothellers impure,
 Spendthrifts and booted sportsmen, oft'ner seen
 With belted waist, and pointers at their heels,
 Than in the bounds of duty? What was learn'd,
 If aught was learn'd in childhood, is forgot,
 And such expense, as pinches parents blue,
 And mortifies the lib'ral hand of love,
 Is squander'd in pursuit of idle sports
 And vicious pleasures, buys the boy a name,
 That sits a stigma on his father's house,
 And cleaves through life inseparably close
 To him that wears it What can after games
 Of riper joys, and commerce with the world,
 The lewd vain world that must receive him soon,
 Add to such erudition thus acquired,
 Where science and where virtue are profess'd?

They may confirm his habits, rivet fast
 His folly, but to spoil him is a task
 That bids defiance to th' united pow'rs
 Of fashion, dissipation, taverns, stews
 Now, blame we most the nurselings, or the nurse?
 The children crook'd and twisted and deform'd,
 Through want of care, or her whose winking eye
 And slumb'ring oscitancy¹ mars the brood?
 The nurse no doubt Regardless of her charge
 She needs herself correction, needs to learn
 That it is dang'rous sporting with the world,
 With things so sacred as a nation's trust,
 The nurture of her youth, her dearest pledge

All are not such I had a brother once—
 Peace to the mem'ry of a man of worth,
 A man of letters and of manners too—
 Of manners sweet as virtue always wears,
 When gay good-nature dresses her in smiles
 He graced a college,² in which order yet
 Was sacred, and was honour'd, loved, and wept,
 By more than one, themselves conspicuous there
 Some minds are temper'd happily, and mixt
 With such ingredients of good sense and taste
 Of what is excellent in man, they thirst
 With such a zeal to be what they approve,
 That no restraints can circumscribe them more,
 Than they themselves by choice, for wisdom's sake
 Nor can example hurt them What they see
 Of vice in others but enhancing more
 The charms of virtue in their just esteem
 If such escape contagion, and emerge
 Pure, from so foul a pool, to shine abroad,
 And give the world their talents and themselves
 Small thanks to those whose negligence or sloth
 Exposed their inexperience to the snare,
 And left them to an undirected choice

See then¹ the quiver broken and decay'd,
 In which are kept our arrows Rusting there
 In wild disorder and unfit for use,
 What wonder if discharged into the world

¹ Laziness the *Spectator* speaks of "the oscitancy of transcribers"
² Gonnet College, Cambridge —O

They shame their shooters with a random flight,
 Their points obtuse, and feathers drunk with wine.
 Well may the church wage unsuccessful war
 With such artill'ry arm'd Vice parries wide
 Th' undreaded volley with a sword of straw,
 And stands an impudent and fearless mark

Have we not track'd the felon home, and found
 His birthplace and his dam? The country mourns—
 Mourns, because ev'ry plague that can infect
 Society, and that saps and worms the base
 Of th' edifice that Policy has raised,
 Swarms in all quarters, meets the eye, the ear,
 And suffocates the breath at ev'ry turn
 Profusion breeds them And the cause itself
 Of that calamitous mischief has been found,
 Found too where most offensive, in the skirts
 Of the robed pedagogue! Else, let th' arraign'd
 Stand up unconscious and refute the charge
 So, when the Jewish Leader¹ stretch'd his arm
 And waved his rod divine, a race obscene,
 Spawn'd in the muddy beds of Nile, came forth
 Polluting Egypt Gardens, fields, and plains
 Were cover'd with the pest The streets were fill'd
 The croaking nuisance lurk'd in ev'ry nook,
 Nor palaces nor even chambers 'scaped,
 And the land stank, so num'rous was the fry.

¹ Exodus viii. & c.

BOOK III

THE GARDEN

ARGUMENT

Self recollection and reproof—Address to domestic happiness—Some account of myself—The vanity of many of their pursuits who are reputed wise—Justification of my censures—Divine illumination necessary to the most expert philosopher—The question, What is truth? answered by other questions—Domestic happiness addressed again—Few lovers of the country—My tame hare—Occupations of a retired gentleman in his garden—Pruning—Framing—Greenhouse—Sowing of flower seeds—The country preferable to the town even in the winter—Reasons why it is deserted at that season—Ruinous effects of gaming and of expensive improvement—Book concludes with an apostrophe to the metropolis.

As one who, long in thickets and in brakes
 Entangled, winds now this way and now that
 His devious course uncertain, seeking home,
 Or, having long in mury ways been foil'd
 And sore discomfited, from slough to slough
 Plunging, and half despairing of escape,
 If chance at length he find a greensward smooth
 And faithful to the foot, his spirits rise,
 He chirrups brisk his car-erecting steed,
 And winds his way with pleasure and with ease,
 So I, designing other themes, and call'd
 T' adorn the Sofa with eulogium due,
 To tell its slumbers and to paint its dreams,
 Have rambled wide In country, city, seat
 Of academie fame (howe'er deserved)
 Long held, and scarcely disengaged at last
 But now with pleasant pace, a cleaner road
 I mean to tread I feel myself at large,
 Courageous, and refresh'd for future toil
 If toil await me, or if dangers new

Since pulpits fail, and sounding-boards reflect
 Most part an empty ineffectual sound,
 What chance that I, to fame so little known,
 Nor conversant with men or manners much,
 Should speak to purpose, or with better hope
 Crack the satiric thong? 'Twere wiser far

For me, enamour'd of sequester'd scenes,
 And charm'd with rural beauty, to repose,
 Where chance may throw me, beneath elm or vine
 My languid limbs, when summer sears the plains;
 Or when rough winter rages, on the soft
 And shelter'd Sofa, while the nitrous air
 Feeds a blue flame and makes a cheerful hearth
 There, undisturb'd by folly, and apprized
 How great the danger of disturbing her,
 To muse in silence, or at least confine
 Remarks that gall so many to the few,
 My partners in retreat. Disgust conceal'd
 Is oft-times proof of wisdom, when the fault
 Is obstinate, and cure beyond our reach

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
 Of Paradise that hast survived the fall!
 Though few now taste thee unimpair'd and pure,
 Or, tasting, long enjoy thee, too infirm
 Or too incautious to preserve thy sweets
 Unmixt with drops of bitter, which neglect
 Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup
 Thou art the nurse of virtue. In thine arms
 She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,
 Heav'n-born and destined to the skies again
 Thou art not known where pleasure is adored,
 That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist
 And wand'ring eyes, still leaning on the arm
 Of Novelty, her fickle frail support,
 For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
 And finding in the calm of truth-tried love
 Joys that her stormy raptures never yield
 Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made
 Of honour, dignity, and fair renown,
 Till prostitution elbows us aside
 In all our crowded streets, and senates seem
 Convened for purposes of empire less,
 Than to release th' adulteress from her bond.
 Th' adulteress! what a theme for angry verse,
 What provocation to th' indignant heart
 That feels for injured love! but I disdain
 The nauseous task to paint her as she is,
 Cruel, abandon'd, glorying in her shame
 No let her pass, and charioted along
 In guilty splendour shake the public ways;
 The frequency of crimes has wash'd them white,

And verse of mine shall never brand the wretch,
 Whom matrons now, of character unsmirch'd,¹
 And chaste themselves, are not ashamed to own
 Virtue and vice had bound'ries in old time
 Not to be pass'd, and she that had renounced
 Her sex's honour, was renounced herself
 By all that prized it, not for prud'ry's sake,
 But dignity's, resentful of the wrong
 'Twas hard, perhaps, on here and there a wail
 Desirous to return, and not received,
 But was an wholesome rigour in the main,
 And taught th' unblemish'd to preserve with care
 That purity, whose loss was loss of all
 Men too were nice in honour in those days,
 And judged offenders well Then he that sharp'd,
 And pocketed a prize by fraud obtain'd,
 Was mark'd and shunn'd as odious He that sold
 His country, or was slack when she required
 His ev'ry nerve in action and at stretch,
 Paid with the blood that he had basely spared
 The price of his default But now,—yes, now,
 We are become so candid and so fair,
 So lib'ial in construction, and so rich
 In Christian charity, (good-natured age!)
 That they are safe, sinners of either sex,
 Transgress what laws they may Well dress'd, well
 bred,
 Well equipag'd, is ticket good enough
 To pass us readily through ev'ry door
 Hypocrisy, detest her as we may,
 (And no man's hatred ever wrong'd her yet)
 May claim this merit still—that she admits
 The worth of what she mimics with such care,
 And thus gives virtue indirect applause,
 But she has burnt her mask, not needed here,
 Where vice has such allowance, that her shifts
 And specious semblances have lost their use

I was a stricken deer that left the herd
 Long since, with many an arrow deep infixt
 My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
 To seek a tranquil death in distant shades
 There was I found by one who had himself
 Been hurt by th' archers In his side he bore,

¹ Not dirtied, or stained Shakspeare (*Hamlet*, Act iv Scene 5) has
 "unsmirched brow"

And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars
 With gentle force soliciting the daris
 He drew them forth, and heal'd and bade me live
 Since then, with few associates in remote
 And silent woods I wander, far from those
 My former partners of the peopled scene,
 With few associates, and not wishing more
 Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
 With other views of men and manners now
 Than once, and others of a life to come
 I see that all are wanderers, gone astray
 Each in his own delusions, they are lost
 In chase of fancied happiness, still woo'd
 And never won Dream after dream ensues,
 And still they dream that they shall still succeed,
 And still are disappointed, rings the world
 With the vain stir I sum up half mankind
 And add two thirds of the remaining half,
 And find the total of their hopes and fears
 Dreams, empty dreams The million flit as gay,
 As if created only, like the fly,
 That spreads his wo'ley wings in th' eye of noon
 To sport their season and be seen no more
 The rest are sober dreamers, grave and wise
 And pregnant with discoveries new and rare
 Some write a narrative of wars and feats
 Of heroes little known, and call the rant
 A history, describe the man, of whom
 His own coevals took but little note,
 And paint his person, character, and views,
 As they had known him from his mother's word
 They disentangle from the puzzled skein
 In which obscurity has wrapp'd them up,
 The threads of politic and shrewd design
 That ran through all his purposes, and charge
 His mind with meanings that he never had
 Or having, kept conceal'd Some drill and bore
 The solid earth, and from the strata there
 Extract a register, by which we learn
 That He, who made it and reveal'd its date
 To Moses, was mistaken in its age
 Some, more acute and more industrious still,
 Contrive creation, travel nature up
 To the sharp peak of her sublimest height,
 And tell us whence the stars, why some are fixt,
 And planetary some, what gave them first

Rotation, from what fountain flow'd their light
 Great contest follows, and much learned dust
 Involves the combatants, each claiming truth,
 And truth disclaiming both And thus they spend
 The little wick of life's poor shallow lamp
 In playing tricks with nature, giving laws
 To distant worlds, and trifling in their own
 Is't not a pity now, that tickling rheums
 Should ever tease the lungs, and blear the sight
 Of oracles like these? Great pity too,
 That having wielded th' elements, and built
 A thousand systems, each in his own way,
 They should go out in fume and be forgot?
 Ah! what is life thus spent? and what are they
 But frantic who thus spend it? all for smoke—
 Eternity for bubbles proves at last
 A senseless bargain When I see such games
 Play'd by the creatures of a Pow'r who swears
 That he will judge the earth, and call the fool
 To a sharp reek'ning that has lived in vain,
 And when I weigh this seeming wisdom well,
 And prove it in th' infallible result
 So hollow and so false—I feel my heart
 Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,
 If this be learning, most of all deceived
 Great crimes alarm the conscience, but it sleeps
 While thoughtful man is plausibly amused
 Defend me therefore common sense, say I,
 From reveries so airy, from the toil
 Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
 And growing old in drawing nothing up!

'Twere well says one sage erudite, profound,
 Terribly arch'd and aquiline his nose,
 And overbuilt with most impending brows,
 'Twere well could you permit the world to live
 As the world pleases What's the world to you?
 Much I was born of woman, and drew milk
 As sweet as charity from human breasts
 I think, articulate, I laugh and weep
 And exercise all functions of a man
 How then should I and any man that lives
 Be strangers to each other? Pierce my vein,
 Take of the crimson stream meand'ring there,
 And catechise it well Apply your glass,
 Search it, and prove now if it be not blood

Congenial with thine own, and if it be,
 What edge of subtilty canst thou suppose
 Keen enough wise and skilful as thou art,
 To cut the link of brotherhood, by which
 One common Maker bound me to the kind?
 True, I am no proficient, I confess,
 In arts like yours I cannot call the swift
 And perilous ragings from the angry clouds,
 And bid them hide themselves in th' earth beneath,
 I cannot analyse the air, nor catch
 The parallax¹ of yonder luminous point
 That seems half quenched in the immense abyss
 Such pow'rs I boast not—neither can I rest
 A silent witness of the headlong rage,
 Or heedless folly by which thousands die,
 Bono of my bone, and kindred souls to mine.

God never meant that man should scale the heav'ns
 By strides of human wisdom In his world,
 Though wondrous, he commands us in his word
 To seek him rather where his mercy shines
 The mind indeed, enlighten'd from above,
 Views him in all, ascribes to the grand cause
 The grand effect, acknowledges with joy
 His manner, and with rapture tastes his style
 But never yet did philosophy tube,
 That brings the planets home into the eye
 Of observation, and discovers else
 Not visible, his family of worlds,
 Discover him that rules them, such a veil
 Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
 And dark in things divine Full often too
 Our wayward intellect, the more we learn
 Of nature, overlooks her Author more,
 From instrumental causes proud to draw
 Conclusions retrograde, and mad mistake
 But if his word once teach us, shoot a ray
 Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal
 Truths undiscern'd but by that holy light,
 Then all is plain Philosophy, baptized
 In the pure fountain of eternal love,
 Has eyes indeed, and, viewing all she sees
 As meant to indicate a God to man,
 Gives him his praise, and forfeits not her own

¹ The parallax of a star is the difference between its true and its apparent place.

Learning has borne such fruit in other days
 On all her branches Piety has found
 Friends in the friends of science, and true pray'r
 Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dews
 Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage!
 Sagacious reader of the works of God,
 And in his word sagacious Such too thine,
 Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,
 And fed on manna And such thine, in whom
 Our British Thomas gloried with just cause,
 Immortal Hale¹ for deep discernment praised,
 And sound integrity not more, than famed
 For sanctity of manners undefiled

All flesh is grass,¹ and all its glory fades
 Like the fair flow'r dishevell'd in the wind,
 Riches have wings,² and grandeur is a dream,
 The man we celebrate must find a tomb,
 And we that worship him, ignoble graves
 Nothing is proof against the gen'ral curse
 Of vanity, that seizes all below³
 The only amaranthine flow'r on earth
 Is virtue, th' only lasting treasure, truth
 But what is truth? 'twas Pilate's question⁴ put
 To truth itself, that deign'd him no reply
 And wherefore? will not God impart his light
 To them that ask it?—Freely,—'tis his joy,
 His glory, and his nature to impart
 But to the proud, uncandid, insincere,
 Or negligent inquirer, not a spark
 What's that which brings contempt upon a book
 And him that writes it, though the style be neat,
 The method clear, and argument exact?
 That makes a minister in holy things
 The joy of many, and the dread of more,
 His name a theme for praise and for reproach?—
 That, while it gives us worth in God's account,
 Depreciates and undoes us in our own?
 What pearl is it that rich men cannot buy,
 That learning is too proud to gather up,
 But which the poor and the despised of all
 Seek and obtain, and often find unsought?
 Tell me, and I will tell thee what is truth

¹ Isaiah xl. 6, 7
² Ecclesiastes i. 2

³ Proverbs xxiii. 5
⁴ St John xviii. 39

Oh, friendly to the best pursuits of man,
 Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
 Domestic life in rural leisure pass'd!
 Few know thy value, and few taste thy sweet
 Though many boast thy favours, and affect
 To understand and choose thee for their own
 But foolish man foregoes his proper bliss,
 Ev'n as his first progenitor, and quits,
 Though placed in paradise (for earth has still
 Some traces of her youthful beauty left),
 Substantial happiness for transient joy
 Scenes form'd for contemplation, and to nurse
 The growing seeds of wisdom, that suggest,
 By ev'ry pleasing image they present,
 Reflections such as meliorate the heart,
 Compose the passions, and exalt the mind,
 Scenes such as these, 'tis his supreme delight
 To fill with riot and defile with blood.
 Should some contagion, kind to the poor brutes
 We persecute, annilulate the tribes
 That draw the sportsman over hill and dale
 Fearless, and rapt away from all his cares,
 Should never game-fowl hatch her eggs again,
 Nor baited hook deceive the fish's eye,
 Could pageantry, and dance, and feast, and song
 Be quell'd in all our summer-months' retreats,
 How many self-deluded nymphs and swains,
 Who dream they have a taste for fields and groves
 Would find them hideous nurs'ries of the spleen,
 And crowd the roads, impatient for the town!
 They love the country, and none else, who seek
 For their own sake its silence and its shade,
 Delights which who would leave, that has a heart
 Susceptible of pity, or a mind
 Cultured and capable of sober thought,
 For all the savage din of the swift pack,
 And clamours of the field? Detested sport,
 That owes its pleasures to another's pain,
 That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks
 Of harmless nature, dumb, but yet endued
 With eloquence, that agonics inspire,
 Of silent tears and heart-distending sighs!
 Vain tears, alas! and sighs that never find
 A corresponding tone in jovial souls
 Well—one at least is safe One shelter'd hare
 Has never heard the sanguinary yell

Of cruel man, exulting in her woes
 Innocent partner of my peaceful home,
 Whom ten long years' experience of my care
 Has made at last familiar, she has lost
 Much of her vigilant instinctive dread,
 Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine
 Yes—thou mayst eat thy bread, and lick the hand
 That feeds thee, thou mayst frolic on the floor
 At evening, and at night retire secure
 To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarm'd,
 For I have gain'd thy confidence, have pledged
 All that is human in me, to protect
 Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love
 If I survive thee I will dig thy grave,
 And when I place thee in it, sighing say,
 I knew at least one hare that had a friend

How various his employments, whom the world
 Calls idle, and who justly in return
 Esteems that busy world an idler, too !
 Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps his pen,
 Delightful industry enjoy'd at home,
 And nature in her cultivated trim
 Dress'd to his taste, inviting him abroad—
 Can he want occupation who has these ?
 Will he be idle who has much t' enjoy ?
 Me, therefore, studious of laborious ease,
 Not slothful, happy to deceive the time,
 Not waste it, and aware that human life
 Is but a loan to be repaid with use,
 When He shall call his debtors to account,
 From whom are all our blessings, bus'ness finds
 Ev'n here while sedulous I seek t' improve,
 At least neglect not, or leave unemploy'd
 The mind he gave me, driving it, though slack,
 Too oft, and much impeded in its work
 By causes not to be divulged in vain,
 To its just point—the service of mankind
 He that attends to his interior self,
 That has a heart and keeps it, has a mind
 That hungers and supplies it, and who seeks
 A social, not a dissipated life,
 Has business, feels himself engaged t' achieve
 No unimportant, though a silent task
 A life, all turbulence and noise, may seem
 To him that leads it, wise and to be praised,

But wisdom is a pearl with most success
 Sought in still water, and beneath clear skies
 He that 's ever occupied in storms,
 Or dives not for it, or brings up instead,
 Vainly industrious, a disgraceful prize

The morning finds the self-sequester'd man
 Fresh for his task, intend what task he may
 Whether inclement seasons recommend
 His warm but simple home, where he enjoys,
 With her who shares his pleasures and his heart,
 Sweet converse, sipping calm the fragrant lymph
 Which neatly she prepares, then to his book
 Well chosen, and not sullenly perused
 In selfish silence, but imparted oft
 As aught occurs that she may smile to hear,
 Or turn to nourishment digested well
 Or if the garden with its many cares,
 All well repaid, demand him, he attends
 The welcome call, conscious how much the hand
 Of lubbard¹ labour needs his watchful eye,
 Oft loit'ring lazily if not o'erseen,
 Or misapplying his unskilful strength
 Nor does he govern only or direct,
 But much performs himself, no works indeed
 That ask robust tough sinews, bred to toil,
 Servile employ—but such as may amuse,
 Not tire, demanding rather skill than force
 Proud of his well spread walls, he views his trees
 That meet (no barren interval between)
 With pleasure more than ev'n their fruits afford,
 Which, save himself who trains them, none can feel
 These therefore are his own peculiar charge,
 No meaner hand may discipline the shoots,
 None but his steel approach them What is weak,
 Distemper'd, or has lost prolific pow'rs,
 Impair'd by age, his unrelenting hand
 Dooms to the knife Nor does he spare the soft
 And succulent that feeds its giant growth,
 But barren, at th' expense of neighb'ring twigs
 Less ostentatious, and yet studded thick
 With hopeful gems The rest, no portion left
 That may disgrace his art, or disappoint
 Large expectation, he disposes neat

At measured distances that air and sun
 Admitted freely may afford their aid,
 And ventilate and warm the swelling buds
 Hence Summer has her riches, Autumn hence,
 And hence ev'n Winter tills his wither'd hand
 With blushing fruits, and plenty not his own¹
 Fair recompense of labour well bestow'd
 And wise precaution, which a clime so rude
 Makes needful still, whose Spring is but the child
 Of churlish Winter in her froward moods
 Discov'ring much the temper of her sire
 For oft, as if in her the stream of mild
 Maternal nature had reversed its course,
 She brings her infants forth with many smiles,
 But, once deliver'd, kills them with a frown
 He therefore, timely warn'd, himself supplies
 Her want of care screening and keeping warm
 The plenteous bloom, that no rough blast may sweep
 His garlands from the boughs Again, as oft
 As the sun peeps and vernal airs breathe mild,
 The fence withdrawn, he gives them ev'ry beam,
 And spreads his hopes before the blaze of day

To raise the prickly and green coated gourd
 So grateful to the palate, and when rare
 So coveted, else base and disesteem'd—
 Food for the vulgar merely—is an art
 That toiling ages have but just matured,
 And at this moment unessay'd in song
 Yet gnats have had, and frogs and mice long since
 Then eulogy, those sang the Mantuan bard,
 And these the Grecian in ennobling strains,
 And in thy numbers, Phillips, shines for aye
 The solitary Shilling Pardon then,
 Ye sage dispensers of poetic fame!
 Th' ambition of one meaner fair, whose pow'rs
 Presuming an attempt not less sublime,
 Pant for the praise of dressing to the taste
 Of critic appetite, no sordid fare,
 A cucumber, while costly yet and scarce

The stable yields a stercoraceous heap
 Impregnated with quick fermenting salts,
 And potent to resist the freezing blast

1 "Mistrarquo non se fructus et non sua dona" CIGAL —O

And glossy, he commits to pots of size
 Dumulative, well fill'd with well-prepared
 And fruitful soil, that has been treasured long,
 And drunk no moisture from the dripping clouds
 These on the warm and genial earth that hides
 The smoking manure, and o'erspreads it all,
 He places lightly, and, as time subdues
 The rage of fermentation, plunges deep
 In the soft medium, till they stand immersed.
 Then rise the tender germs upstarting quick
 And spreading wide their spongy lobes, at first
 Pale, wan, and livid, but assuming soon
 If fann'd by balmy and nutritious air
 Strain'd through the friendly mats, a vivid green
 Two leaves produced, two rough indented leaves,
 Cautious he pinches from the second stalk
 A pimple, that portends a future sprout,
 And interdicts its growth Thence straight succeed
 The branches, sturdy to his utmost wish,
 Prolific all, and harbingers of more
 The crowded roots demand enlargement now
 And transplantation in an ampler space
 Indulged in what they wish, they soon supply
 Large foliage, overshadowing golden flow'rs,
 Blown on the summit of th' apparent fruit
 These have their sexes, and when summer shines
 The bee transports the fertilizing meal
 From flow'r to flow'r, and ev'n the breathing air
 Wafts the rich prize to its appointed use
 Not so when winter scowls Assistant art
 Then acts in nature's office, brings to pass
 The glad espousals and ensures the crop

Grudge not, ye rich (since luxury must have
 His dainties, and the world's more num'rous half
 Lives by contriving delicacies for you),
 Grudge not the cost Ye little know the cares,
 The vigilance, the labour, and the skill
 That day and night are exercised, and hang
 Upon the ticklish balance of suspense,
 That ye may garnish your profuse regales
 With summer fruits, brought forth by wintry suns
 Ten thousand dangers lie in wait to thwart
 The process Heat and cold, and wind and steam,
 Moisture and drought, mice, worms, and swarming flies
 Minute as dust and numberless, oft work

In ev'ry flash of his far heaving eye,
 Nor taste alone and well contriv'd display
 Suffice to give the marshall'd ranks the grace
 Of their complete effect. Much yet remains
 Unsung, and many cares are yet behind
 And more laborious. Cues on which depends
 Their vigour, injured soon, not soon restored
 The soil must be renew'd, which often wash'd
 Loses its treasure of salubrious salts,
 And disappoints the roots, the slender roots
 Close interwoven where they meet the vase,
 Must smooth be shorn away, the spires which anchor
 Must fly before the knife, the wither'd leaf
 Must be detach'd, and where it strewn the floor
 Swept with a woman's neatness, breeding else
 Contagion, and disseminating death
 Discharge but these kind offices (and who
 Would spare, that loves them, so while they live?)
 Well they reward the toil. The sight is pleas'd,
 The scent regaled, each odorous leaf
 Each opening blossom freely breathes abroad
 Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweetest

So manifold, all pleasing in their kind,
 All healthful, are the employes of rural life,
 Reiterated as the wheel of time
 Runs round, still ending, and beginning still
 Nor are these all. To deck the shapely hill
 That, softly swell'd and gently dress'd, appears
 A flow'ry island from the dark green plain
 Emerging, must be deem'd a labour due
 To no mean hand, and needs the touch of taste
 Here also grateful mixture of well match'd
 And sorted hues (each giving each relief,
 And by contriv'd beauty charming more)
 Is needful. Strength may wield the sword and spear
 May turn the cloud, and wheel the cannon's fire,
 But elegance chief traces the garden's form
 And most exquisite, is the fair result
 Of thought, the creature of a poet's hand
 Without it all is Gothic as the scene
 To which the incipit enters the scene
 Near vanderhulst, and the garden's form
 But proud of his name, the garden's form
 He, and the garden's form, the garden's form
 Of the garden's form, the garden's form

And fairly laid the zodiac in the dust
 He, therefore, who would see his flow'rs disposed
 Sightly and in just order, ere he gives
 The beds the trusted treasure of their seeds,
 Forecasts the future whole, that when the scene
 Shall break into its preconceived display,
 Each for itself, and all as with one voice
 Conspiring, may attest his bright design
 Nor even then, dismissing us perform'd
 His pleasant work, may he suppose it done
 Few self-supported flow'rs endure the wind
 Uninjured, but expect th' upholding aid
 Of the smooth shaven prop, and neatly tied
 Are wedded thus, like beauty to old age,
 For int'rest sake, the living to the dead
 Some clothe the soil that feeds them, far diffused
 And lowly creeping, modest and yet fair,
 Like virtue, thriving most where little seen
 Some, more aspiring, catch the neighbour shrub
 With clasping tendrils, and invest his branch,
 Else unadorn'd, with many a gay festoon
 And fragrant chaplet, recompensing well
 The strength they borrow with the grace they lend
 All hate the rank society of weeds,
 Noisome, and ever greedy to exhaust
 Th' impoverish'd earth, an overbearing race,
 That, like the multitude made faction-mad,
 Disturb good order, and degrade true worth

Oh blest seclusion from a jarring world,
 Which he, thus occupied, enjoys! Retreat
 Cannot, indeed, to guilty man restore
 Lost innocence, or cancel follies past,
 But it has peace, and much secures the mind
 From all assaults of evil, proving still
 A faithful barrier, not o'erleap'd with ease
 By vicious custom, raging uncontroll'd
 Abroad, and desolating public life
 When fierce temptation, seconded within
 By traitor appetite, and arm'd with darts
 Temper'd in hell, invades the throbbing breast,
 To combat may be glorious, and success
 Perhaps may crown us, but to fly is safe
 Had I the choice of sublunary good,
 What could I wish that I possess not here?
 Health, leisure, means t' improve it, friendship, peace

No loose or wanton though a wand'ring muse
 And constant occupation without care
 Thus blest I draw a picture of that bliss,
 Hopeless indeed, that dissipated minds,
 And profligate abusers of a world
 Create I fear so much in vain for them,
 Should seek the pulch'ring joys that I describe,
 Allured by my report, but sure no less
 That, self-condemn'd they must neglect the prize
 And what they will not taste, must yet approve
 What we admire we praise; and when we praise
 Advance it into notice, that, its worth
 Acknowledge others may admire it too
 I therefore recommend, though at the risk
 Of popular disgust, yet boldly still
 The cause of piety and sacred truth
 And virtue, and those virtues which God ordain'd,
 Should I best secure them and promote them most,
 Since that I love, and with regret perceive
 Forsaken, or through folly not enjoy'd
 Pure is the nymph, though liberal of her smiles,
 And chaste though unconfin'd, whom I extol
 Not as the prince¹ in Shushan, when he call'd,
 Vain glorious of her charms, his Vahsi forth,
 To grace the full pavilion His design
 Was but to best his own peculiar good,
 Which all might view with envy, none partake
 My charmer is not mine alone, my sweets,
 And she that sweetens all my bitters, too,
 Nature, enchanting Nature, in whose form
 And lineaments divine I trace a hand
 That errs not and find raptures still renew'd
 Is free to all men,—universal prize
 Strange that so fair a creature should yet want
 Admirers, and be destined to divide
 With meaner objects ev'n the few she finds
 Stript of her ornaments, her leaves and flow'rs,
 She loses all her influence Cities then
 Attract us, and neglected Nature pines
 Abandon'd, as unworthy of our love
 But are not wholesome airs, though unperfum'd
 By roses, and clear suns, though scarcely felt.
 And groves if unharmonious, yet secure
 From clamour, and whose very silence charms

¹ Abasuerus, Esther i. 10, 11

To be preferr'd to smoke,—to the eclipse
 That Metropolitan volcanoes make,
 Whose Stygian throats breathe darkness all day long,
 And to the stir of commerce, driving slow,
 And thund'ring loud, with his ten thousand wheels?
 They would be, were not madness in the head
 And folly in the heart, were England now
 What England was, plain, hospitable, kind,
 And undebauch'd But we have bid farewell
 To all the virtues of those better days,
 And all their honest pleasures Mansions once
 Knew their own masters, and laborious hands
 That had survived the father, served the son
 Now the legitimate and rightful lord
 Is but a transient guest, newly arrived
 And soon to be supplanted He that saw
 His patrimonial timber cast its leaf,
 Sells the last scantling, and transfers the price
 To some shrewd sharper, ere it buds again
 Estates are landscapes, gazed upon awhile,
 Then advertised, and auctioneer'd away.
 The country starves, and they that feed th' o'ercharged
 And surfeited lewd town with her fair dues,
 By a just judgment strip and starve themselves
 The wings that waft our riches out of sight
 Grow on the gamester's elbows, and th' alert
 And nimble motion of those restless joints.
 That never tire, soon fans them all away
 Improvement too, the idol of the age,
 Is fed with many a victim Lo! he comes—
 The omnipotent magician, Brown,¹ appears
 Down falls the venerable pile, th' abode
 Of our forefathers, a grave whisker'd race,
 But tasteless Springs a palace in its stead,
 But in a distant spot, where more exposed
 It may enjoy th' advantage of the North
 And aguish East, till time shall have transform'd
 Those naked acres to a shelt'ring grove
 He speaks The lake in front becomes a lawn,
 Woods vanish, hills subside, and valleys rise,
 And streams, as if created for his use,
 Pursue the track of his directing wand

¹ But had Cowper forgotten his own obligations to this ingenious designer, by whom Weston Park was laid out?

Sinuous or straight, now rapid and now slow,
 Now murmur'ing soft, now roaring in cascades,
 Ev'n as he bids Th' enraptured owner smiles
 'Tis finish'd And yet, finish'd as it seems,
 Still wants a grace, the loveliest it could show,
 A mine to satisfy the enormous cost
 Drain'd to the last poor item of his wealth,
 He sighs, departs, and leaves the accomplish'd plan
 That he has touch'd, retouch'd, many a day
 Labour'd, and many a night pursued in dreams,
 Just when it meets his hopes, and proves the heaven
 He wanted, for a wealthier to enjoy
 And now perhaps the glorious hour is come,
 When having no stake left, no pledge t' endear
 Her interests, or that gives her sacred cause
 A moment's operation on his love,
 He burns with most intense and flagrant zeal
 To serve his country Ministerial grace
 Deals him out money from the public chest,
 Or, if that mine be shut, some private purse
 Supplies his need with an usurious loan,
 To be refunded duly, when his vote,
 Well-managed, shall have earn'd its worthy price
 Oh, innocent compared with arts like these,
 Grape and cock'd pistol and the whistling ball
 Sent through the traveller's temples! He that finds
 One drop of heav'n's sweet mercy in his cup,
 Can dig, beg, rot, and perish well-content,
 So he may wrap himself in honest rags
 At his last gasp, but could not for a world
 Fish up his dirty and dependent bread
 From pools and ditches of the commonwealth,
 Sordid and sick'ning at his own success

Ambition, av'rice, penury incurr'd
 By endless riot, vanity, the lust
 Of pleasure and variety, despatch,
 As duly as the swallows disappear,
 The world of wand'ring knights and squires to town,
 London ingulfs them all The shark is there,
 And the shark's prey, the spendthrift, and the leech
 That sucks him There the sycophant, and he
 That with bare-headed and obsequious bows
 Begs a warm office, doom'd to a cold jail
 And groat per diem if his patron frown.

The levee swarms, as if in golden pomp
 Were character'd on ev'ry statesman's door,
 "BATTER'D AND BANKRUPT FORTUNES MENDED
 HFRF"

These are the charms that sully and eclipse
 The charms of nature 'Tis the cruel gripe
 That lean hard-handed poverty inflicts,
 The hope of better things, the chance to win,
 The wish to shine, the thirst to be amused,
 That, at the sound of Winter's hoary wing,
 Unpeople all our counties of such herds
 Of flutt'ring, loit ring, cringing, begging, loose
 And wanton vagrants, as make London, vast
 And boundless as it is, a crowded coop

Oh thou resort and mart of all the earth,
 Chequer'd with all complexions of mankind,
 And spotted with all crimes, in whom I see
 Much that I love, and more that I admire,
 And all that I abhor, thou freckled fair
 That pleases and yet shocks me, I can laugh
 And I can weep, can hope, and can despond,
 Feel wrath and pity when I think on thee!
 Ten righteous would have saved a city once,
 And thou hast many righteous — Well for thee—
 That salt preserves thee, more corrupted else,
 And therefore more obnoxious at this hour,
 Than Sodom in her day had pow'r to be,
 For whom God heard his Abr'am plead in vain.

BOOK IV

THE WINTER EVENING

ARGUMENT

The post comes in—The newspaper is read—The world contemplated at a distance—Address to Winter—The amusements of a rural winter evening compared with the fashionable ones—Address to Evening—A brown study—Fall of snow in the evening—The waggoner—A poor family-piece—The rural thief—Public houses—The multitude of them censured—The farmer's daughter, what she was—What she is—The simplicity of country manners almost lost—Causes of the change—Desertion of the country by the rich—Neglect of magistrates—The militia principally in fault—The new recruit and his transformation—Reflection on bodies corporate—The love of rural objects natural to all, and never to be totally extinguished

HARK! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright,—
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumb'ring at his back
True to his charge the close-pack'd load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,
And, having dropp'd th' expected bag—pass on
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some,
To him indiff'rent whether grief or joy
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks,
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with am'rous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all
But oh, th' important budget ' usher'd in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say
What are its tidings? have our troops awaked?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave?

Is India free? and does she wear her plumed
 And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
 Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
 The popular harangue, the tart reply,
 The logic and the wisdom and the wit
 And the loud laugh—I long to know them all,
 I burn to set th' imprison'd wranglers free,
 And give them voice and utterance once again

Now shut the fire, and close the shutters fast,
 Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
 And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
 Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
 That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
 So let us welcome peaceful evening in.
 Not such his evening, who with shining face
 Sweats in the crowded theatre, and squeeze'd
 And bored with elbow-points through both his sides
 Out scolds the ranting actor on the stage,
 Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb
 And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
 Of patriots bursting with heroic rage,
 Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles
 This folio of four pages, happy work!
 Which not ev'n critics criticise, that holds
 Inquisitive attention while I read
 Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
 Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break,
 What is it but a map of busy life,
 Its fluctuations and its vast concerns?
 Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
 That tempts ambition On the summit, see,
 The seals of office glitter in his eyes,
 He climbs, he pants, he grasps them At his heels,
 Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,
 And with a dextrous jerk soon twists him down
 And wins them, but to lose them in his turn
 Here rills of oily eloquence, in soft
 Meanders, lubricate the course they take,
 'The modest speaker is ashamed and grieved
 'T'engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,
 Begs a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,
 However trivial all that he conceives
 Sweet bashfulness! it claims, at least, this praise,
 The dearth of information and good sense,
 That if forfells us, always comes to pass

Cat'racts or declamation thunder here,
There forests of no meaning spread the page
In which all comprehension wanders lost,
While fields of pleasantry amuse us there,
With merry descants on a nation's woes
The rest appears a wilderness of strange
But gay confusion, roses for the cheeks,
And lilies for the brows of faded age,
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
Heav'n, earth, and ocean plunder'd of their sweets,
Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
Sermons and city feasts and fav'rite airs,
Ethereal journeys, submarine exploits,
And Katterfelto with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wond'ring for his bread

'Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat
To peep at such a world, to see the stir
Of the great Babel and not feel the crowd,
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
At a safe distance, where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjured ear
Thus sitting and surveying thus at ease
The globe and its concerns, I seem advanced
To some secure and more than mortal height,
That lib'rates and exempts me from them all
It turns submitted to my view, turns round
With all its generations, I behold
The tumult and am still The sound of war
Has lost its terrors ere it reaches me,
Grieves, but alarms me not I mourn the pride
And av'rice that makes man a wolf to man,
Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats
By which he speaks the language of his heart,
And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.
He travels and expatiates, as the bee
From flow'r to flow'r, so he from land to land,
The manners, customs, policy of all
Pay contribution to the store he gleans,
He sucks intelligence in ev'ry clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return—a rich repast for me
He travels and I too I tread his deck,
Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
Discover countries, with a kindred heart
Suffer his woes and share in his escapes,

While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.

Oh Winter! ruler of th' inverted year,
Thy scatter'd hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,
Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fringed with a beard made white with other snow
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car indebted to no wheels,
But urged by storms along its shipp'ry way,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,¹
And dreaded as thou art Thou hold'st the sun
A pris'n'r in the yet undawning East,
Short'ning his journey between morn and noon
And hurrying him impatient of his stay
Down to the rosy West, but kindly still
Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gathering at short notice in one group
The family dispersed, and fixing thought
Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fire side enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturb'd retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted evening know
No ratt'ling wheels stop short before these gates,
No powder'd pert proficient in the art
Of sounding an alarm, assaults these doors
Till the street rings, no stationary steeds
Cough their own knell, while heedless of the sound
The silent circle fan themselves, and quake
But here the needle plies its busy task,
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flow'r,
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,
Unfolds its bosom, buds and leaves and sprigs
And curly tendrils, gracefully disposed,
Follow the nimble finger of the fair,
A wreath that cannot fade, of flow'rs that blow
With most success when all besides decay

¹ "I see the winter approaching without much concern, though a passionate lover of fine weather and the pleasant scenes of summer. But the long evenings have their comforts too; and there is hardly to be found upon earth I suppose, so snug a creature as an Englishman, by his fireside, in the winter. I mean, however, an Englishman that lives in the country" - (To Hill, October 7, 1793)

The poet's or historian's page, by one
 Made vocal for th' amusement of the rest,
 The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds
 The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out
 And the clear voice symphonious, yet distinct,
 And in the charming strife triumphant still,
 Beguile the night, and set a keener edge
 On female industry, the threaded steel
 Flies swiftly, and unfelt the task proceeds
 The volume closed, the customary rites
 Of the last meal commence A Roman meal,
 Such as the mistress of the world once found
 Delicious, when her patriots of high note,
 Perhaps by moonlight, at their humble doors,
 And under an old oak's domestic shade,
 Enjoy'd—spare feast!—a radish and an egg
 Discourse ensues, not trivial, yet not dull,
 Nor such as with a frown forbids the play
 Of fancy, or proscribes the sound of mirth,
 Nor do we madly, like an impious world,
 Who deem religion frenzy, and the God
 That made them an intruder on their joys,
 Start at his awful name, or deem his praise
 A jarring note, themes of a graver tone
 Exciting oft our gratitude and love,
 While we retrace with mem'ry's pointing wand
 That calls the past to our exact review,
 The dangers we have 'scaped, the broken snare,
 The disappointed foe, deliv'rance found
 Unlook'd for, life preserved and peace restored,
 Fruits of omnipotent eternal love —
 Oh evenings worthy of the gods! exclaim'd
 The Sabine bard Oh evenings, I reply,
 More to be prized and coveted than yours,
 As more illumined and with nobler truths,
 That I, and mine, and those we love, enjoy

Is winter hideous in a garb like this?
 Needs he the tragic fur, the smoke of lamps,
 The pent-up breath of an unsav'ry throng
 To thaw him into feeling, or the smart
 And snappish dialogue that flippant wits
 Call comedy, to prompt him with a smile?
 The self complacent actor, when he views
 (Stealing a sidelong glance at a full house)
 The slope of faces from the floor to th' roof,

(As if one master-spring controll'd them all)
 Relax'd into an universal grin,
 Sees not a count'nance there that speaks a joy
 Half so refined or so sincere as ours
 Cards were superfluous here, with all the tricks
 That idleness has ever yet contrived
 To fill the void of an unfurnish'd brain,
 To palliate dulness and give time a shove.
 Time, as he passes us, has a dove's wing,¹
 Unsoil'd and swift and of a silken sound.
 But the world's time is time in masquerade
 Thine, should I paint him, has his pinions fledged
 With motley plumes, and, where the peacock shows
 His azure eyes, is tinctured black and red
 With spots quadrangular of di'mond form,
 Ensanguined hearts, clubs typical of strife,
 And spades, the emblem of untimely graves
 What should be, and what was an hour-glass once,
 Becomes a dice-box, and a billiard mast
 Well does the work of his destructive scythe
 Thus deck'd he charms a world whom fashion blinds
 To his true worth, most pleased when idle most,
 Whose only happy are their wasted hours
 Ev'n misses, at whose age their mothers wore
 The back-string and the bib, assume the dress
 Of womanhood, sit pupils in the school
 Of card-devoted time, and night by night,
 Placed at some vacant corner of the board,
 Learn ev'ry trick, and soon play all the game
 But truce with censure Roving as I rove,
 Where shall I find an end, or how proceed?
 As he that travels far, oft turns aside
 To view some rugged rock, or mould'ring tow'r,
 Which seen delights him not, then coming home,
 Describes and prints it, that the world may know
 How far he went for what was nothing worth,
 So I, with brush in hand and pallet spread
 With colours mixt for a far different use,
 Paint cards and dolls, and ev'ry idle thing
 That fancy finds in her excursive flights

Come, Evening, once again, season of peace,
 Return, sweet Evening, and continue long!
 Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,

¹ The reader may recollect Young's description, and the sublime illustration of it by Blake

With matron-step slow-moving, while the night
Treads on thy sweeping train, one hand employ'd
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charged for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day,
Not sumptuously adorn'd, nor needing aid,
Like homely-featured night, of clust'ring gems,
A star or two just twinkling on thy brow
Suffices thee, save that the moon is thine,
No less than hers, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round
Come then, and thou shalt find thy vot'ry calm,
Or make me so Composure is thy gift
And whether I devote thy gentle hours
To books, to music, or the poet's toil,
To weaving nets for bud-alluring fruit,
Or twining silken threads round iv'ry reels,
When they command whom man was born to please,
I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still

Just when our drawing-rooms begin to blaze
With lights, by clear reflection multiplied
From many a mirror, in which he of Gath,
Goliath, might have seen his giant bulk
Whole without stooping, tow'ring crest and all,
My pleasures too begin But me perhaps
The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile
With faint illumination, that uplifts
The shadow to the ceiling, there by fits
Dancing uncouthly to the quiv'ring flame
Not undelightful is an hour to me
So spent in parlour twilight, such a gloom
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,
The mind contemplative, with some new theme
Pregnant, or indisposed alike to all
Laugh ye, who boast your more mercurial pow'rs
That never feel a stupor, know no pause,
Nor need one, I am conscious, and confess,
Fearless, a soul that does not always think¹
Me oft has fancy ludicrous and wild

¹ Ho says in a letter,—"I frequently do not think at all. I am much mistaken if I do not often catch myself napping in this way; but when I ask myself, what was the last idea (as the ushers at Westminster ask an idle boy, what was the last word), I am not able to answer, but, like the boy in question, am obliged to stare, and say nothing."

Sooth'd with a waking dream of houses, tow'rs,
 Trees, churches, and strange visages express'd
 In the red cinders, while with poring eye
 I gazed, myself creating what I saw
 Nor less amused have I quiescent watch'd
 The sooty films that play upon the bars
 Pendulous, and foreboding in the view
 Of superstition, prophesying still,
 Though still deceived, some stranger's near approach
 'Tis thus the understanding takes repose
 In indolent vacuity of thought,
 And sleeps and is refresh'd Meanwhile the face
 Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask
 Of deep deliberation, as the man
 Were task'd to his full strength, absorb'd and lost
 Thus oft reclined at ease, I lose an hour
 At evening, till at length the freezing blast
 That sweeps the bolted shutter, summons home
 The recollected pow'rs, and, snapping short
 The glassy threads with which the fancy weaves
 Her brittle toys, restores me to myself
 How calm is my recess! and how the frost
 Raging abroad, and the rough wind, endear
 The silence and the warmth enjoy'd within!
 I saw the woods and fields at close of day
 A variegated show, the meadows green
 Though faded, and the lands, where lately waved
 The golden harvest, of a mellow brown,
 Upturn'd so lately by the forceful share,
 I saw far off the weedy fallows smile
 With verdure not unprofitable, grazed
 By flocks fast feeding, and selecting each
 His favourite herb, while all the leafless groves
 That skirt th' horizon wore a sable hue,
 Scarce noticed in the kindred dusk of eve
 To morrow brings a change, a total change,
 Which even now, though silently perform'd
 And slowly, and by most unfelt, the face
 Of universal nature undergoes
 Fast falls a fleecy show'r, the downy flakes,
 Descending and with never ceasing lapse
 Softly alighting upon all below,
 Assimilate all objects Earth receives
 Gladly the thick'ning mantle, and the green
 And tender blade that fear'd the chilling blast,
 Escapes unhurt beneath so warm a veil

In such a world, so thorny, and where none
 Finds happiness unblighted, or if found,
 Without some thursty sorrow at its side,
 It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
 Against the law of love, to measure lots
 With less distinguish'd than ourselves, that thus
 We may with patience bear our mod'rate ills,
 And sympathize with others, suffering more
 Ill fares the trav'ler now, and he that stalks
 In pond'rous boots beside his reeking team;
 The wain goes heavily, impeded sore
 By congregated loads adhering close
 To the clogg'd wheels, and, in its sluggish pace,
 Noiseless appears a moving hill of snow
 The toiling steeds expand the nostril wide,
 While ev'ry breath, by respiration strong
 Forced downward, is consolidated soon
 Upon their jutting chests He, form'd to bear
 The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
 With half-shut eyes, and pucker'd checks, and teeth
 Presented bare against the storm, plods on,
 One hand secures his hat, save when with both
 He brandishes his pliant length of whip,
 Resounding oft, and never heard in vain
 Oh happy ! and, in my account, denied
 That sensibility of pain with which
 Refinement is endued, thrice happy thou
 Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed
 The piercing cold, but feels it unimpair'd,
 The learned finger never need explore
 Thy vig'rous pulse, and the unhealthful East,
 That breathes the spleen, and searches ev'ry bone
 Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee
 Thy days roll on exempt from household care,
 Thy waggon is thy wife, and the poor beasts,
 That drag the dull companion to and fro,
 Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy care
 Ah, treat them kindly ! rude as thou appear'st,
 Yet show that thou hast mercy, which the great,
 With needless hurry whirl'd from place to place,
 Humane as they would seem, not always show

Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat,
 Such claim compassion in a night like this,
 And have a friend in every feeling heart
 Warm'd while it lasts, by labour, all day long

They brave the season and yet find at eve
 Ill clad and fed but sparely, time to cool
 The frugal housewife trembles when she lights
 Her scanty stock of brushwood blaring clear,
 But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys,
 The few small embers left she nurses well.
 And while her infant race with outspread hands
 And crowded knees sit cowering o'er the sparks
 Retires content to quake so they be warm'd
 The man feels least, as more inn'd than she
 To winter and the current in his veins
 More briskly moved by his severer toil,
 Yet he too finds his own distress in theirs
 The taper soon extinguish'd, which I saw
 Dangled along at the cold finger's end
 Just when the day declined, and the brown loaf
 Lodged on the shelf, half eaten, without sauce
 Of savory cheese, or butter costlier still,
 Sleep seems their only refuge—For alas!
 Where penury is felt the thought is chain'd,
 And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few
 With all this thrift they thrive not—All the care
 Ingenious parsimony takes but just
 Saves the small inventory bed and stool
 Skillet and old carved chest from public sale
 They live, and live without extorted alms
 From grudging hands, but other boasts have none
 To sooth their honest pride that scorns to beg.
 Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.
 I praise you much, ye meek and patient pair,
 For ye are worthy, choosing rather far
 A dry but independent crust, hard-earned
 And eaten with a sigh than to endure
 The rugged frowns and insolent rebuffs
 Of knaves in office partial in their work
 Of distribution, liberal of their aid
 To clam'rous importunity in rags,
 But oftimes deaf to sup, hants, who would blush
 To wear a tattered garb however coarse,
 Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth,
 These ask with painful sayness, and, refused
 Because deserving, silently retire
 But be ye of good courage! Time itself
 Shall much befriend you. Time shall give increase
 And all your numerous progeny, well train'd,
 But helpless, in few years shall find their hands,

And labour too Meanwhile ye shall not want
 What, conscious of your virtues, we can spare,
 Nor what a wealthier than ourselves may send
 I mean the man, who when the distant poor
 Need help, denies them nothing but his name¹

But poverty with most, who whimper forth
 Their long complaints, is self-inflicted woe,
 Th' effect of laziness or sottish waste
 Now goes the nightly thief prowling abroad
 For plunder, much solicitous how best
 He may compensate for a day of sloth,
 By works of darkness and nocturnal wrong.
 Woe to the gard'ner's pale, the farmer's hedge
 Plush'd neatly and secured with driven stakes
 Deep in the loamy bank Uptorn by strength
 Resistless in so bad a cause, but lame
 To better deeds, he bundles up the spoil—
 An ass's burden,—and when laden most
 And heaviest, light of foot steals fast away
 Nor does the boarded hovel better guard
 The well stack'd pile of riven logs and roots,
 From his pernicious force Nor will he leave
 Unwrench'd the door, however well secured,
 Where chancleer amidst his harem sleeps
 In unsuspecting pomp, twitch'd from the perch
 He gives the princely bird with all his wives
 To his voracious bag, struggling in vain,
 And loudly wond'ring at the sudden change
 Nor this to feed his own 'Twere some excuse
 Did pity of their sufferings warp aside
 His principle, and tempt him into sin
 For their support, so destitute, but they
 Neglected pine at home, themselves, as more
 Exposed than others, with less scruple made
 His victims, robb'd of their defenceless all
 Cruel is all he does 'Tis quenchless thirst
 Of ruinous ebriety that prompts
 His ev'ry action, and imbrutes the man
 Oh for a law to noose the villain's neck
 Who starves his own, who persecutes the blood
 He gave them in his children's veins, and hates
 And wrongs the woman he has sworn to love.

Pass where we may, through city, or through town

Village or hamlet of this merry land,
 Though lean and beggar'd, every twentieth pace
 Conducts th' unguarded nose to such a whiff
 Of stale debauch, forth issuing from the styer
 That law has licensed, as makes temp'rance reel
 There sit involved and lost in curling clouds
 Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,
 The lackey, and the groom The craftsman there
 Takes a Lethæan leave of all his toil,
 Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,
 And he that kneads the dough, all loud alike,
 All learned, and all drunk The siddle screams
 Plaintive and piteous, as it wept and wail'd
 Its wasted tones and harmony unheard,
 Fierce the dispute, what'er the theme, while she,
 Fell Discord, arbitress of such debate,
 Perch'd on the sign post holds with even hand
 Her undecisive scales In this she lays
 A weight of ignorance, in that, of pride,
 And smiles delighted with th' eternal pose
 Dire is the frequent curse and its twin sound
 The cheek distending oath not to be praised
 As ornamental, musical, polite,
 Like those which modern senators employ,
 Whose oath is rhet'ric, and who swear for fame
 Behold the schools in which plebeian minds,
 Once simple, are initiated in arts
 Which some may practise with politer grace,
 But none with readier skill! 'tis here they learn
 The road that leads from competence and peace
 To indigence and rapine, till at last
 Society, grown weary of the load,
 Shakes her encumber'd lap, and casts them out.
 But censure profits little Vain th' attempt
 To advertise in verse a public pest,
 That, like the filth with which the peasant feeds
 His hungry acres, stinks and is of use
 Th' excise is fatten'd with the rich result
 Of all this riot, and ten thousand casks,
 For ever dribbling out their base contents,
 Touch'd by the Midas finger of the state,
 Bleed gold for Ministers to sport away
 Drunk and be mad then, 'tis your country bids!
 Gloriously drunk, obey th' important call,
 Her cause demands th' assistance of your throats, &
 Ye all can swallow, and she asks no more

Would I had fall'n upon those happier days
 That poets celebrate, those golden times
 And those Arcadian scenes that Maro sings,
 And Sidney,¹ warbler of poetic prose.
 Nymphs were Dianas then, and swains had hearts
 That felt their virtues Innocence it seems,
 From courts dismiss'd, found shelter in the groves
 The footsteps of simplicity, impress'd
 Upon the yielding herbage, (so they sing)
 Then were not all effaced Then speech profane
 And manners profligate were rarely found,
 Obscured as prodigies, and soon reclaim'd
 Vain wish! those days were never airy dreams
 Sat for the picture, and the poet's hand,
 Imparting substance to an empty shade,
 Imposed a gay delirium for a truth
 Grant it I still must envy them an age
 That favour'd such a dream, in days like these
 Impossible, when virtue is so scarce,
 That to suppose a scene where she presides
 Is tramontane,² and stumbles all belief
 No We are polish'd now The rural lass,
 Whom once her virgin modesty and grace,
 Her artless manners and her neat attire,
 So dignified, that she was hardly less
 Than the fair shepherdess of old romance,
 Is seen no more. The character is lost
 Her head adorn'd with lappets pinn'd aloft
 And ribbons streaming gay, superbly raised
 And magnified beyond all human size,
 Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand
 For more than half the tresses it sustains,
 Her elbows ruffled, and her tottering form
 Ill propp'd upon French heels, she might be deem'd
 (But that the basket dangling on her arm
 Interprets her more truly) of a rank
 Too proud for dairy-work, or sale of eggs,
 Expect her soon with foot-boy at her heels,
 No longer blushing for her awkward load,
 Her train and her umbrellola all her care

The town has tinged the country, and the stain
 Appears a spot upon a vestal's robe,

¹ Sir Philip Sidney, in the "Arcadia"

² *Tramontane* is properly applied to people living beyond the mountain it has, therefore, a general signification of "foreign" We read in the *Tull* (No 222) of "tramontane lovers"

The worse for what it soils The fashion runs
 Down into scenes still rural, but alas !
 Scenes rarely graced with rural manners now
 Time was when in the pastoral retreat
 Th' unguarded door was safe, men did not watch
 T' invade another's right, or guard their own
 Then sleep was undisturb'd by fear, unscared
 By drunken howlings, and the chilling tale
 Of midnight murder was a wonder heard
 With doubtful credit, told to frighten babes
 But farewell now to unsuspecting nights,
 And slumbers unalarm'd Now, ere you sleep,
 See that your polish'd arms be primed with care,
 And drop the night-bolt Russians are abroad,
 And the first larum of the cock's shrill throat
 May prove a trumpet, summoning your ear
 To horrid sounds of hostile feet within
 Ev'n daylight has its dangers, and the walk
 Through pathless wastes and woods, unconscious once
 Of other tenants than melodious birds,
 Or harmless flocks, is hazardous and bold
 Lamented change ! to which full many a cause
 Inveterate, hopeless of a cure, conspires
 The course of human things from good to ill,
 From ill to worse, is fatal, never fails
 Increase of pow'r begets increase of wealth,
 Wealth luxury, and luxury excess,
 Excess, the scrofulous and itchy plague
 That seizes first the opulent, descends
 To the next rank contagious, and in time
 Taints downward all the graduated scale
 Of order, from the chariot to the plough
 The rich, and they that have an arm to check
 The licence of the lowest in degree,
 Desert their office, and themselves, intent
 On pleasure, haunt the capital and thus,
 To all the violence of lawless hands,
 Resign the scenes their presence might protect.
 Authority itself not seldom sleeps,
 Though resident, and witness of the wrong
 The plump convivial parson often bears
 The magisterial sword in vain, and lays
 His reverence and his worship both to rest,
 On the same cushion of habitual sloth.
 Perhaps timidity restrains his arm,
 When he should strike he trembles, and sets free,

Himself enslaved by terror of the band,
 Th' audacious convict whom he dares not bind
 Perhaps, though by profession ghostly pure,
 He, too, may have his vice, and sometimes prove
 Less dainty than becomes his grave outside
 In lucrative concerns Examine well
 His milk-white hand The palm is hardly clean—
 But here and there an ugly smutch appears
 Foh! 'twas a bribe that left it He has touch'd
 Corruption Whoso seeks an audit here
 Propitious, pays his tribute, game or fish,
 Wildfowl or ven'son, and his errand speeds

But faster far and more than all the rest
 A noble cause, which none who bears a spark
 Of public virtue ever wish'd removed,
 Works the deplored and mischievous effect
 'Tis universal soldiership has stabb'd
 The heart of merit in the meaner class
 Arms, through the vanity and brainless rage
 Of those that bear them, in whatever cause,
 Seem most at variance with all moral good,
 And incompatible with serious thought
 The clown, the child of nature, without guile,
 Blest with an infant's ignorance of all
 But his own simple pleasures, now and then
 A wrestling match, a foot-race, or a fair,
 Is balloted, and trembles at the news
 Sheepish he doffs his hat, and mumbling swears
 A Bible-oath to be whate'er they please,
 To do he knows not what The task perform'd,
 That instant he becomes the sergeant's care,
 His pupil, and his torment, and his jest,
 His awkward gait, his introverted toes,
 Bent knees, round shoulders, and dejected looks,
 Procure him many a curse By slow degrees,
 Unapt to learn and form'd of stubborn stuff,
 He yet by slow degrees puts off himself,
 Grows conscious of a change, and likes it well
 He stands erect, his slouch becomes a walk,
 He steps right onward, martial in his air,
 His form and movement, is as smart above
 As meal and larded locks can make him, wears
 His hat or his plumed helmet with a grace,
 And, his three years of heroship expired,
 Returns indignant to the slighted plough

He hates the field in which no life or drum
 Attends him, drives his cattle to a march,
 And sighs for the smart comrades he has left.
 'Twere well if his exterior change were all—
 But with his clumsy port the wretch has lost
 His ignorance and harmless manners too
 To swear, to game, to drink, to show at home
 By lowdness, idleness, and sabbath-breach,
 The great proficiency he made abroad,
 T' astonish and to grieve his gazing friends,
 To break some maiden's and his mother's heart,
 To be a pest where he was useful once,
 Are his sole aim, and all his glory now!

Man in society is like a flow'r
 Blown in its native bed 'Tis there alone
 Its faculties expanded in full bloom
 Shine out, there only reach their proper use
 But man associated and leagued with man
 By regal warrant, or self joined by bond
 For interest sake, or swarming into clans
 Beneath one head for purposes of war,
 Like flow'rs selected from the rest, and bound
 And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,
 Fades rapidly, and by compression marr'd
 Contracts doleful not to be endured
 Hence charter'd boroughs are such public plagues,
 And burghers, men immaculate perhaps
 In all their private functions, once combined,
 Become a loathsome body, only fit
 For dissolution, hurtful to the main
 Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin
 Against the charities of domestic life,
 Incorporated, seem at once to lose
 Their nature, and, disclaiming all regard
 For mercy and the common rights of man,
 Build factories with blood, conducting trade
 At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe
 Of innocent commercial justice red.
 Hence, too the field of glory, as the world
 Misdeems it, dazzled by its bright array,
 With all the majesty of thund'ring pomp,
 Enchanting music and immortal wreaths,
 Is but a school where thoughtlessness is taught
 On principle, where foppery atones
 For folly, gallantry for ev'ry vice

But slighted as it is, and by the great
Abandon'd and, which still I more regret,
Infected with the manners and the modes
It knew not once, the country wins me still
I never fram'd a wish, or form'd a plan
That flatter'd me with hopes of earthly bliss,
But there I laid the scene There early stray'd
My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice
Had found me, or the hope of being free
My very dreams were rural, rural too
The first-born efforts of my youthful muse,
Sportive, and jingling her poetic bells
Ere yet her ear was mistress of their pow'rs
No bard could please me but whose lyre was tuned
To Nature's praises Heroes and their feats
Fatigued me, never weary of the pipe
Of Tityrus, assembling as he sang
The rustie throng beneath his fav'rite beech
Then Milton had indeed a poet's charms
New to my taste, his Paradise surpass'd
The struggling efforts of my boyish tongue
To speak its excellence, I danced for joy
I marvell'd much that, at so ripe an age
As twice seven years, his beauties had then first
Engaged my wonder, and admiring still,
And still admiring, with regret supposed
The joy half lost because not sooner found
Thee, too, enamour'd of the life I loved,
Pathetic in its praise, in its pursuit
Determined, and possessing it at last
With transports such as favour'd lovers feel,
I studied, prized, and wish'd that I had known,
Ingenious Cowley! and though now, reclaim'd
By modern lights from an erroneous taste,
I cannot but lament thy splendid wit
Entangled in the cobwebs of the schools
I still revere thee, courtly though retired,
Though stretch'd at ease in Chertsey's silent bow'rs,
Not unemploy'd, and finding rich amends
For a lost world in solitude and verse
'Tis born with all The love of Nature's works
Is an ingredient in the compound, man,
Infused at the creation of the kind
And though th' Almighty Maker has throughout
Discriminated each from each, by strokes
And touches of his hand, with so much art

D versified, that two were never found
 'Twins at all points—yet this obtains in all,
 That all discern a beauty in his works,
 And all can taste them minds that have been form'd
 And tutor'd, with a relish more exact,
 But none without some relish, none unmoved
 It is a flame that dies not even there,
 Where nothing feeds it Neither business, crowds,
 Nor habits of luxurious city life,
 Whatever else they smother of true worth
 In human bosoms, quench it or abate
 The villas, with which London stands begirt
 Like a swarth Indian with his belt of beads,
 Prove it A breath of unadulterate air,
 The glimpse of a green pasture, how they cheer
 The citizen, and brace his languid frame!
 Ev'n in the stiling bosom of the town,
 A garden in which nothing thrives, has charms
 That soothe the rich possessor, much consoled
 That here and there some sprigs of mournful mint,
 Of nightshade, or valerian, grace the well
 He cultivates These serve him with a hint
 That Nature lives, that sight refreshing green
 Is still the livery she delights to wear,
 Though sickly samples of th' exuberant whole
 What are the casements lined with creeping herbs,
 The prouder sashes fronted with a range
 Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,
 The Frenchman's¹ darling? are they not all proofs
 That man, immured in cities, still retains
 His unborn nextinguishable thirst
 Of rural scenes, compensating his loss
 By supplemental shifts, the best he may?
 The most unfurnish'd with the means of life,
 And they that never pass their brick-wall bounds
 To range the fields, and treat their lungs with air,
 Yet feel the burning instinct over-head
 Suspend their crazy boxes planted thick
 And water'd duly There the pitcher stands
 A fragment, and the spoutless tea pot there,
 Sad witnesses how close pent man regrets
 The country, with what ardour he contrives
 A peep at nature, when he can no more

¹ Mignonette.

Hail, therefore, patroness of health and ease
And contemplation, heart-consoling joys
And harmless pleasures, in the throng'd abode
Of multitudes unknown, hail rural life!
Address himself who will to the pursuit
Of honours, or emolument, or fame,
I shall not add myself to such a chase,
Thwart his attempts, or envy his success
Some must be great Great offices will have
Great talents And God gives to ev'ry man
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,
That lifts him into life, and lets him fall
Just in the meane he was ordain'd to fill
To 'he deliv'rer of an injured land
He gives a tongue t' enlarge upon, a heart
To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs,
To monarchs dignity, to judges sense,
To artists ingenuity and skill,
To me an unambitious mind, content
In the low vale of life, that early felt
A wish for ease and leisure and ere long
Found here that leisure and that ease I wish'd

BOOK V

THE WINTER MORNING WALK

ARGUMENT

A frosty morning—The foddering of cattle—The woodman and his dog—The poultry—Whimsical effects of frost at a waterfall—The Empress of Russia's palace of ice—Amusements of monarchs—War one of them—Wars, whence—And whence monarchy—The evils of it—English and French loyalty contrasted—The Bastille, and a prisoner there—Liberty the chief recommendation of this country—Modern patriotism questionable, and why—The perishable nature of the best human institutions—Spiritual liberty not perishable—The slavish state of man by nature—Deliver him, Doist, if you can—Grace must do it—The respective merits of patriots and martyrs stated—Their different treatment—Happy freedom of the man whom grace makes free—His relish of the works of God—Address to the Creator

'Tis morning, and the sun, with ruddy orb
 Ascending, fires th' horizon, while the clouds,
 That crowd away before the driving wind,
 More ardent as the disk emerges more,
 Resemble most some city in a blaze,
 Seen through the leafless wood. His slanting ray
 Slides ineffectual down the snowy vale,
 And, tinging all with his own rosy hue,
 From ev'ry herb and ev'ry spiry blade
 Stretches a length of shadow o'er the field,
 Mine, spindling into longitude immense,
 In spite of gravity, and sage remark
 That I myself am but a fleeting shado,
 Provokes me to a smile With eye askance
 I view the muscular proportion'd limb
 Transform'd to a lean shank, the shapeless pair,
 As they design'd to mock me, at my side
 Take step for step, and, as I near approach
 The cottage, walk along the plaster'd wall,
 Prepost'rous sight! the legs without the man,
 The verdure of the plain lies buried deep
 Beneath the dazzling deluge, and the bents¹

¹ "It is a little dust, like the dust of a bent which grows upon the clustor,
 at the first coming forth."—BACON, on "Gardens"

And coarser grass upspearing o'er the rest,
Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine
Conspicuous, and, in bright apparel clad,
And fledged with icy feathers, nod superb
The cattle mourn in corners, where the fence
Screens them, and seem, half petrified, to sleep
In unrecumbent sadness There they wait
Their wonted fodder, not, like hung'ring man,
Fretful if unsupplied, but silent, meek,
And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay
He from the stack carves out th' accustom'd load,
Deep-plunging, and again deep-plunging oft
His broad keen knife into the solid mass
Smooth as a wall the upright romnant stands,
With such undeviating and even force
He severs it away no needless care,
Lest storms should overset the leaning pile
Deciduous, or its own unbalanced weight.
Forth goes the woodman, leaving unconcern'd
The cheerful haunts of man, to wield the axe
And drive the wedge in yonder forest drear,
From morn to eve his solitary task
Shaggy and lean and shrewd, with pointed ears
And tail cropp'd short, half lurcher and half cur,
His dog attends him Close behind his heel
Now creeps he slow, and now with many a frisk,
Wide scamp'ring, snatches up the drifted snow
With iv'ry teeth, or ploughs it with his snout,
Then shakes his powder'd coat and barks for joy
Heedless of all his pranks the sturdy churl
Moves right toward the mark, nor stops for aught,
But now and then, with pressure of his thumb,
T'adjust the fragrant charge of a short tube,
That fumes beneath his nose, the trailing cloud
Streams far behind him, scenting all the air
Now from the roost, or from the neighb'ring pale,
Where, diligent to catch the first faint gleam
Of smiling day, they gossip'd side by side,
Come trooping at the housewife's well-known call
The feather'd tribes domestic, half on wing,
And half on foot, they brush the fleecy flood,
Conscious, and fearful of too deep a plunge
The sparrows peep, and quit the shelt'ring caves
To seize the fair occasion, well they eye
The scatter'd grain, and, thievishly resolved
T'escape th' impending famine, often scared

As oft return, a pert, voracious kind
 Clean riddance quickly made, one only care
 Remains to each, the search of sunny nook,
 Or shed impervious to the blast Resign'd
 To sad necessity the cock foregoes
 His wonted strut, and, wading at their head
 With well consider'd steps, seems to resent
 His alter'd gait, and stateliness retrench'd
 How find the myriads, that in summer cheer
 The hills and valleys with their ceaseless songs,
 Due sustenance, or where subsist they now?
 Earth yields them nought the imprison'd worm is
 safe

Beneath the frozen clod, all seeds of herbs
 Lie cover'd close, and berry bearing thorns
 That feed the thrush (whatever some suppose),
 Afford the smaller minstrel no supply
 The long-protracted rigour of the year
 Thins all their num'rous flocks In chunks and holes
 Ten thousand seek an unmolested end,
 As instinct prompts, self buried ere they die
 The very rooks and daws forsake the fields,
 Where neither grub nor root nor earth-nut now
 Repays their labour more, and perch'd aloft
 By the way side, or stalking in the path,
 Lean pensioners upon the trav'ller's track,
 Pick up their nauseous dole, though sweet to them,
 Of voided pulse, or half digested grain
 The streams are lost amid the splendid blank,
 O'erwhelming all distinction On the flood
 Indurated and fix'd the snowy weight
 Lies undissolved, while silently beneath
 And unperceived the current steals away
 Not so where, scornful of a check, it leaps
 The mill dam, dashes on the restless wheel,
 And wantons in the pebbly gulf below
 No frost can bind it there Its utmost force
 Can but arrest the light and smoky mist
 That in its fall the liquid sheet throws wide
 And see where it has hung th' embroider'd banks
 With forms so various, that no pow'rs of art,
 The pencil, or the pen, may trace the scene!
 Here glitt'ring turrets rise, upbearing high
 (Fantastic misarrangement) on the roof
 Large growth of what may seem the sparkling trees,
 And shrubs of fairy land The crystal drops

That trickle down the branches, fast congeal'd,
 Shoot into pillars of pellucid length,
 And prop the pile they but adorn'd before
 Here grotto within grotto safe defies
 The sunbeam There unboss'd and fretted wild,
 The growing wonder takes a thousand shapes
 Capricious, in which fancy seeks in vain
 The likeness of some object seen before.
 Thus nature works as if to mock at art,
 And in defiance of her rival pow'rs,
 By these fortuitous and random strokes
 Performing such inimitable feats,
 As she with all her rules can never reach
 Less worthy of applause though more admired,
 Because a novelty, the work of man,
 Imperial mistress¹ of the fur-clad Russ !
 Thy most magnificent and mighty freak,
 The wonder of the North No forest fell
 When thou wouldst build no quarry sent its stores
 T' enrich thy walls, but thou didst hew the floods,
 And make thy marble of the glassy wave
 In such a palace Aristæus² found
 Cyrene, when he bore the plaintive tale
 Of his lost bees to her maternal ear
 In such a palace poetry might place
 The armoury of winter, where his troops,
 The gloomy clouds, find weapons, arrowy sleet,
 Skin-piercing volley, blossom-bruising hail,
 And snow that often blinds the trav'ler's course,
 And wraps him in an unexpected tomb
 Silently as a dream the fabric rose
 No sound of hammer or of saw was there
 Lest upon ice, the well adjusted parts
 Were soon conjoin'd, nor other cement ask'd
 Than water interfused to make them one
 Lamps gracefully disposed, and of all hues,
 Illumed ev'ry side A wat'ry light
 Gleam'd through the clear transparency, that seem'd
 Another moon new-risen, or meteor fall'n
 From heav'n to earth, of lambent flame serene
 So stood the brittle prodigy, though smooth
 And shipp'ry the materials, yet frost-bound

¹ The ice palace of Catherine, in her road to the Ukraine

² Eurydice, pursued by Aristæus, was stung by a serpent, and died the gods, in anger, destroyed all the bees of Aristæus, but by the assistance of his mother, he recovered his former prosperity.

Firm as a rock Nor wanted aught within
 That royal residence might well besit,
 For grandeur or for use Long wavy wreaths
 Of flow'rs, that fear'd no enemy but warmth
 Blush'd on the panels Mirror needed none
 Where all was vitreous, but in order due
 Convivial table and commodious seat
 (What seem'd at least commodious seat) were there,
 Sofa and couch and high-built throne august
 The same lubricity was found in all,
 And all was moist to the warm touch, a scene
 Of evanescent glory, once a stream,
 And soon to slide into a stream again.
 Alas! 'twas but a mortifying stroke
 Of undesign'd severity, that glanced
 (Made by a monarch) on her own estate,
 On human grandeur and the courts of kings
 'Twas transient in its nature, as in show
 'Twas durable, as worthless, as it seem'd
 Intrinsically precious, to the foot
 Treach'rous and false, it smiled, and it was cold

Great princes have great playthings Some have
 play'd
 At hewing mountains into men, and some
 At building human wonders mountain high
 Some have amused the dull sad years of life
 (Life spent in indolence, and therefore sad)
 With schemes of monumental fame, and sought
 By pyramids and mausolean pomp,
 Short lived themselves, t' immortalize their bones
 Some seek diversion in the tented field,
 And make the sorrows of mankind their sport
 But war's a game, which, were their subjects wise,
 Kings should not play at Nations would do well
 To extort their truncheons from the puny hands
 Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds
 Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil,
 Because men suffer it, their toy the world.

When Babel was confounded, and the great
 Confed'rary of projectors wild and vain
 Was split into diversity of tongues,
 Then, as a shepherd separates his flock,
 These to the upland, to the valley those,
 God drove asunder and assign'd their lot

To all the nations Ample was the boon
He gave them, in its distribution fair
And equal, and he bade them dwell in peace
Peace was awhile their care They plough'd and sow'd,
And reap'd their plenty without grudge or strife.
But violence can never longer sleep
Than human passions please In ev'ry heart
Are sown the sparks that kindle fiery war,
Occasion needs but fan them, and they blaze
Cain had already shed a brother's blood
The deluge wash'd it out, but left unquench'd
The seeds of murder in the breast of man
Soon, by a righteous judgment, in the line
Of his descending progeny was found
The first artificer of death, the shrewd
Contriver who first sweated at the forge,
And forced the blunt and yet unblooded steel
To a keen edge, and made it bright for war
Him Tubal named, the Vulcan of old times,
The sword and falchion their inventor claim,
And the first smith was the first murd'rer's son
His art survived the waters, and ere long,
When man was multiplied and spread abroad
In tribes and clans, and had begun to call
These meadows and that range of hills his own,
The tasted sweets of property begat
Desire of more, and industry in some
To improve and cultivate their just demesne,
Made others covet what they saw so fair
Thus wars began on earth These fought for spoil,
And those in self defence Savage at first
The onset, and irregular At length
One eminent above the rest, for strength,
For stratagem, or courage, or for all,
Was chosen leader Him they served in war,
And him in peace for sake of warlike deeds
Rev'reneed no less Who could with him compare?
Or who so worthy to control themselves
As he, whose prowess had subdued their foes?
Thus war, affording field for the display
Of virtue, made one chief, whom times of peace,
Which have their exigencies too, and call
For skill in government, at length made king
King was a name too proud for man to wear
With modesty and meekness, and the crown,
So dazzling in their eyes who set it on,

Was sure t' intoxicate the brows it bound.
It is the abject property of most,
That being parcel of the common mass,
And destitute of means to raise themselves,
They sink and settle lower than they need
They know not what it is to feel within
A comprehensive faculty, that grasps
Great purposes with ease, that turns and wields
Almost without an effort, plans too vast
For their conception, which they cannot move
Conscious of unpoteuce they soon grow drunk
With gazing, when they see an able man
Step forth to notice, and besotted thus
Build him a pedestal and say—Stand there,
And be our admiration and our praise
They roll themselves before him in the dust,
Then most deserving in their own account
When most extravagant in his applause,
As if exalting him they raised themselves
Thus by degrees, self-cheated of their sound
And sober judgment that he is but man,
They demi deify and fume him so
That in due season he forgets it too
Inflated and astrut with self-conceit
He gulps the windy diet, and ere long,
Adopting their mistake, profoundly thinks
The world was made in vain if not for him
Thenceforth they are his cattle drudges, born
To bear his burdens, drawing in his gears,
And sweating in his service His caprice
Becomes the soul that animates them all
He deems a thousand, or ten thousand lives,
Spent in the purchase of renown for him
An easy reck'ning, and they think the same
Thus kings were first invented and thus kings
Were burnish'd into heroes, and became
The arbiters of this terraqueous swamp,
Storks among frogs, that have but croak'd and die.
Strange that such folly, as lifts bloated man
To emmence fit only for a God,
Should ever drivel out of human lips,
Eve n in the cradled weakness of the world!
Still stranger much, that when at length mankind
Had reach'd the sinowy firmness of their youth,
And could discriminate and argue well
On subjects more myc erious, they were yet

Babes in the cause of freedom, and should fear
 And quake before the gods themselves had made.
 But above measure strange, that neither proof
 Of sad experience, nor examples set
 By some whose patriot virtue has prevail'd,
 Can even now, when they are grown mature
 In wisdom, and with philosophic deeps
 Familiar, serve t' emancipate the rest!
 Such dupes are men to custom, and so prone
 To rev'rence what is ancient, and can plead
 A course of long observance for its use,
 'That even servitude, the worst of ills,
 Because deliver'd down from sire to son,
 Is kept and guarded as a sacred thing
 But is it fit, or can it bear the shock
 Of rational discussion, that a man,
 Compounded and made up like other men
 Of elements tumultuous, in whom lust
 And folly in as ample measure meet,
 As in the bosoms of the slaves he rules,
 Should be a despot absolute, and boast
 Himself the only freeman of his land?
 Should when he pleases, and on whom he will,
 Wage war, with any or with no pretence
 Of provocation giv'n, or wrong sustain'd,
 And force the beggarly last doct, by means
 That his own humour dictates, from the clutch
 Of poverty, that thus he may procure
 His thousands, weary of penurious life,
 A splendid opportunity to die?
 Say ye, who (with less prudence than of old
 Jotham¹ ascribed to his assembled trees
 In politic convention) put your trust
 I' th' shadow of a bramble, and reclined
 In fancied peace beneath his dang'rous branch,
 Rejoice in him and celebrate his sway,
 Where find ye passive fortitude? Whence springs
 Your self denying zeal that holds it good
 To stroke the prickly grievance, and to hang
 His thorns with streamers of continual praise?
 We too are friends to loyalty, we love
 The king who loves the law, respects his bounds,
 And reigns content within them, him we serve
 Freely and with delight, who leaves us free,
 But recollecting still that he is man,

¹ Judges ix 7, 8.

We trust him not too far King though he be
 And king in England, too, ho may be weak
 And vain enough to be ambitious still,
 May exercise amiss his proper pow'rs,
 Or covet more than freemen choose to grant
 Beyond that mark is treason He is ours,
 T' administer, to guard, t' adorn the state,
 But not to warp, or change it We are his,
 To serve him nobly in the common cause
 True to the death, but not to be his slaves
 Mark now the difference, ye that boast your love
 Of kings, between your loyalty and ours
 We love the man The paltry pageant you
 We the chief patron of the commonwealth,
 You the regardless author of its woes,
 We, for the sake of liberty, a king,
 You chains and bondage for a tyrant's sake
 Our love is principle, and has its root
 In reason, is judicious, manly, free,
 Yours, a blind instinct, crouches to the rod,
 And licks the foot that treads it in the dust
 Were kingship as true treasure as it seems,
 Sterling, and worthy of a wise man's wish,
 I would not be a king to be beloved
 Causeless, and daub'd with undecerning praise,
 Where love is mere attachment to the throne,
 Not to the man who fills it as he ought

Whose freedom is by sufferance, and at will
 Of a superior, he is never free
 Who lives, and is not weary of a life
 Exposed to manacles, deserves them well
 The state that strives for liberty, though foil'd
 And forced t' abandon what she bravely sought,
 Deserves at least applause for her attempt,
 And pity for her loss But that's a cause
 Not often unsuccessful, pow'r usurp'd
 Is weakness when opposed, conscious of wrong
 'Tis pusillanimous and prone to flight
 But slaves that once conceive the glowing thought
 Of freedom, in that hope itself possess
 All that the contest calls for, spirit, strength,
 The scorn of danger, and united hearts,
 The surest presage of the good they seek¹

¹ The author hopes that he shall not be censured for unnecessary warmth upon so interesting a subject. He is aware that it is become almost fashionable to stigmatize such sentiments as no better than empty declamation. But it is an ill symptom and peculiar to modern times.—O

Then shame to manhood, and opprobrious more
 To France than all her losses and defeats,
 Old or of later date, by sea or land,
 Her house of bondage worse than that of old
 Which God avenged on Pharaoh—the Bastille!
 Ye horrid tow'rs, th' abodo of broken hearts,
 Ye dungeons and ye cages of despair,
 That monarchs have supplied from age to age
 With music such as suits their sov'reign ears,
 Tho sighs and groans of miserable men!
 There's not an English heart that would not leap
 To hear that ye were fall'n at last, to know
 'That ev'n our enemies, so oft employ'd
 In forging chains for us, themselves were free.
 For he that values liberty, confines
 His zeal for her predominance within
 No narrow bounds, her cause engages him
 Wherever pleaded 'Tis the cause of man
 There dwell the most forlorn of human kind,
 Immured though unaccused, condemn'd untried,
 Cruelly spared, and hopeless of escape
 There, like the visionary emblem seen¹
 By him of Babylon, hie stands a stump,
 And fillot'd about with hoops of brass,
 Still lives, though all its pleasant boughs are gone,
 To count the hour-bell and expect no change,
 And ever as the sullen sound is heard,
 Still to reflect that, though a joyless note
 To him whose moments all have one dull pace,
 Ten thousand rovers in the world at large
 Account it music, that it summons some
 To theatre, or jocund feast, or ball,
 The wearied hieling finds it a release
 From labour, and the lover, that has chid
 Its long delay, feels ev'ry welcome stroke
 Upon his heart-strings trembling with delight—
 To fly for refuge from distracting thought
 To such amusements, as ingenious woe
 Contrives, hard shifting and without her toils—
 To read engraven on the mouldy walls,
 In stagg'ring types, his predecessor's tale,
 A sad memorial, and subjoin his own—
 To turn purveyor to an overgorged
 And bloated spider, till the pamper'd pest

¹ The image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream—Daniel ii. 31–35.

Is made familiar, watches his approach,
 Comes at his call, and serves him for a friend—
 To wear out time in numb'ring to and fro
 The studs that thuck emboss his iron door,
 Then downward and then upward, then aslant
 And then alternate, with a sickly hope
 By dint of change to give his tasteless task
 Some relish, till the sum, exactly found
 In all directions, he begins again—
 Oh comfortless existence! hemm'd around
 With woes, which who that suffers would not kneel
 And beg for exile, or the pangs of death?
 That man should thus encroach on fellow man,
 Abridge him of his just and native rights,
 Eradicate him, tear him from his hold
 Upon th' endearments of domestic life
 And social, nip his fruitfulness and use,
 And doom him for perhaps a heedless word
 To barrenness and solitude and tears,
 Moves indignation, makes the name of king
 (Of king whom such prerogative can please)
 As dreadful as the Manichean god,
 Adored through fear, strong only to destroy

'Tis liberty alone that gives the flow'r
 Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,
 And we are weeds without it All constraint,
 Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
 Is evil, hurts the faculties, impedes
 Their progress in the road of science, blinds
 The eyesight of discov'ry, and begets,
 In those that suffer it, a sordid mind
 Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
 To be the tenant of man's noble form
 Thee therefore still, blameworthy as thou art,
 With all thy loss of empire, and though squeezed
 By public exigence, till annual food
 Fails for the craving hunger of the state,
 Thee I account still happy, and the chief
 Among the nations, seeing thou art free
 My native nook of earth! thy clime is rude,
 Replete with vapours, and disposes much
 All hearts to sadness, and none more than mine;
 Thine unadulterate manners are less soft
 And plausible than social life requires,
 And thou hast need of discipline and art

To give thee what politer France receives
From Nature's bounty—that humane address
And sweetness, without which no pleasure is
In converse, either starved by cold reserve,
Or flush'd with fierce dispute, a senseless brawl;
Yet, being free, I love thee For the sake
Of that one feature, can be well content,
Disgraced as thou hast been, poor as thou art,
To seek no sublunary rest beside
But once enslaved, farewell! I could endure
Chains nowhere patiently, and chains at home,
Where I am free by birthright, not at all.
Then what were left of roughness in the grain
Of British natures wanting its excuse
That it belongs to freemen, would disgust
And shock me I should then with double pain
Feel all the rigour of thy fickle clime,
And, if I must bewail the blessing lost
For which our Hampdens and our Sidneys bled,
I would at least bewail it under skies
Milder, among a people less austere,
In scenes which, having never known me free,
Would not reproach me with the loss I felt
Do I forbode impossible events,
And tremble at vain dreams? Heav'n grant I may
But th' age of virtuous politics is past,
And we are deep in that of cold pretence
Patriots are grown too shrewd to be sincere,
And we too wise to trust them He that takes,
Deep in his soft credulity, the stamp
Design'd by loud declaimers on the part
Of liberty, themselves the slaves of lust,
Incurs derision for his easy faith
And lack of knowledge, and with cause enough
For when was public virtue to be found,
Where private was not? Can he love the whole
Who loves no part? he be a nation's friend
Who is, in truth, the friend of no man there?
Can he be strenuous in his country's cause,
Who slights the charities for whose dear sale
That country, if at all, must be beloved?
—'Tis therefore sober and good men are sad
For England's glory, seeing it wax pale
And sickly, while her champions wear their hearts
So loose to private duty, that no brain,
Healthful and undisturb'd by factious fumes,

Can dream them trusty to the gen'ral weal
 Such were not they of old, whose temper'd blades
 Dispersed the shackles of usurp'd control,
 And hew'd them link from link Then Albion's sons
 Were sons indeed They felt a filial heart
 Beat high within them at a mother's wrongs,
 And shining each in his domestic sphere,
 Shone brighter still once call'd to public view.
 'Tis therefore many, whose sequester'd lot
 Forbids their interference, looking on,
 Anticipate perforce some dire event,
 And seeing the old castle of the state,
 That promised once more firmness, so assai'd
 That all its tempest-beaten turrets shake,
 Stand motionless expectants of its fall
 All has its date below The fatal hour
 Was register'd in heav'n ere time began
 We turn to dust, and all our mightiest works
 Die too The deep foundations that we lay,
 Time ploughs them up, and not a trace remains
 We build with what we deem eternal rock,
 A distant age asks where the fabric stood,
 And in the dust, sifted and search'd in vain,
 The undiscoverable secret sleeps

But there is yet a liberty unsung
 By poets, and by senators unpraised,
 Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the power
 Of earth and hell confed'rate take away,
 A liberty, which persecution, fraud,
 Oppression, prisons, have no power to bind.
 Which whoso tastes can be enslaved no more
 'Tis liberty of heart, derived from heav'n,
 Bought with His blood who gave it to mankind,
 And seal'd with the same token. It is held
 By charter, and that charter sanction'd sure
 By th' unimpeachable and awful oath
 And promise of a God. His other gifts
 All bear the royal stamp that speaks them his.
 And are august, but this transcends them all
 His other works, thus visible display
 Of all creating energy and might,
 Are grand, no doubt, and worthy of the word
 That, finding an interminable space
 Unoccupied, has fill'd the void so well,
 And made so sparkling what was dark before.

But these are not his glory Man, 'tis true,
 Smit with the beauty of so fair a scene,
 Might well suppose th' artificer divine
 Meant it eternal, had he not himself
 Pronounced it transient, glorious as it is,
 And still designing a more glorious far,
 Doom'd it, as insufficient for his praise
 These, therefore, are occasional, and pass,
 Form'd for the confutation of the fool
 Whose lying heart disputes against a God,
 That office served, they must be swept away
 Not so the labours of his love, they shine
 In other heav'ns than these that we behold,
 And fade not Thero is paradise that fears
 No forfeiture, and of its fruits he sends
 Large prelibation oft to saints below
 Of these the first in order, and the pledge
 And confident assurance of the rest,
 Is liberty, a flight into his arms
 Ere yet mortality's fine threads give way,
 A clear escape from tyrannizing lust,
 And full immunity from penal woe

Chains are the portion of revolted man,
 Stripes and a dungeon, and his body serves
 The triplo purpose In that sickly, foul,
 Opprobrious residence, he finds them all
 Propense¹ his heart to idols, he is held
 In silly dotage on created things,
 Careless of their Creator And that low
 And sordid gravitation of his pow'rs
 To a vile clod, so draws him with such force
 Resistless from the centro he should seek,
 That he at last forgets it All his hopes
 Tend downward, his ambition is to sink,
 To reach a depth profounder still, and still
 Profounder, in the fathomless abyss
 Of folly, plunging in pursuit of death
 But ere he gain the comfortless repose
 He seeks, and acquiescence of his soul,
 In heav'n renouncing exilo, he endures—
 What does he not? from lusts opposed in vain
 And self-reproaching conscience He foresees
 The fatal issue to his health, fame, peace,
 Fortune, and dignity, the loss of all

¹ Inclined. The word is used by Hooker.

That can ennoble man, and make frail life,
 Short as it is, supportable Still worse,
 Far worse than all the plagues with which his sin
 Infect his happiest moments, he forbodes
 Ages of hopeless misery, future death,
 And death still future, not a hasty stroke,
 Like that which sends him to the dusty grave,
 But unrepeatable enduring death!
 Scripture is still a trumpet to his fears
 What none can prove a forgery, may be true,
 What none but bad men wish exploded, must
 That scruple checks him Riot is not loud
 Nor drunk enough to drown it In the midst
 Of laughter his compunctions are sincere,
 And he abhors the jest by which he shines
 Remorse begets reform His master-lust
 Falls first before his resolute rebuke,
 And seems dethroned and vanquish'd Peace ensues,
 But spurious and short-lived, the puny child
 Of self congratulating Pride, begot
 On sanctified Innocence Again he falls,
 And fights again, but finds his best essay
 A presage ominous, portending still
 Its own dishonour by a worse relapse
 Till Nature, unavailing Nature soild
 So oft, and wearied in the vain attempt,
 Scoffs at her own performance Reason now
 Takes part with appetite, and pleads the cause,
 Perversely, which of late she so condemn'd,
 With shallow shifts and old devices, worn
 And tatter'd in the service of debauch,
 Cov'ring his shame from his offended sight

“Hath God indeed given appetites to man,
 And stored the earth so plentifully with means
 To gratify the hunger of his wish,
 And doth he reprobate and will he damn
 The use of his own bounty? making first
 So frail a kind, and then enacting laws
 So strict, that less than perfect must despair?
 Falsehood! which whoso but suspects of truth,
 Dishonours God, and makes a slave of man
 Do they themselves, who undertake for hire
 The teacher's office, and dispense at large
 Their weekly dole of edifying strains,
 Attend to their own music? have they faith

In what, with such solemnity of tone
 And gesture, they propound to our belief?
 Nay—conduct hath the loudest tongue The voice
 Is but an instrument on which the priest
 May play what tune he pleases In the deed,
 The unequivocal authentic deed,
 We find sound argument, we read the heart "

Such reasonings (if that name must needs belong
 To excuses in which reason has no part)
 Serve to compose a spirit well inclined
 To live on terms of amity with vice,
 And sin without disturbance Often urged
 (As often as, libidinous discourse
 Exhausted, he resorts to solemn themes
 Of theological and grave import)
 They gain at last his unreserved assent
 Till, harden'd his heart's temper in the forge
 Of lust, and on the anvil of despair,
 He slights the strokes of conscience Nothing moves,
 Or nothing much, his constancy in ill,
 Vain tampering has but foster'd his disease,
 'Tis desperate, and he sleeps the sleep of death
 Haste now, philosopher, and set him free
 Charm the deaf serpent wisely Make him hear
 Of rectitude and fitness moral truth
 How lovely, and the moral sense how sure,
 Consulted and obey'd, to guide his steps
 Directly to the FIRST AND ONLY FAIR
 Spare not in such a cause Spend all the pow'rs
 Of rant and rhapsody in virtue's praise,
 Be most sublimely good, verbosely grand,
 And with poetic trappings grace thy prose
 Till it outmantle all the pride of verse —
 Ah, tinkling cymbal and high sounding brass
 Smitten in vain! such music cannot charm
 Th' eclipse that intercepts truth's heav'nly beam,
 And chills and darkens a wide-wand'ring soul
 The still small voice is wanted He must speak,
 Whose word leaps forth at once to its effect,
 Who calls for things that are not, and they come

Grace makes the slave a freeman 'Tis a change
 That turns to ridicule the turgid speech
 And stately tone of moralists, who boast,
 As if, like him of fabulous renown,

They had indeed ability to smooth
 The shag of savage nature, and were each
 An Orpheus and omnipotent in song
 But transformation of apostate man
 From fool to wise, from earthly to divine,
 Is work for Him that made him He alone,
 And he, by means in philosophic eyes
 Trivial and worthy of disdain, achieves
 The wonder, humanizing what is brute
 In the lost kind, extracting from the lips
 Of asps their venom, overpow'ring strength
 By weakness, and hostility by love

Patriots have toil'd, and in their country's cause
 Bled nobly, and their deeds, as they deserve,
 Receive proud recompense We give in charge
 Their names to the sweet lyre Th' historic muse,
 Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
 To latest times, and sculpture, in her turn,
 Gives bond in stone and over-during brass,
 To guard them, and t' immortalize her trust
 But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,
 To those who, posted at the shrine of truth,
 Have fall'n in her defence A patriot's blood
 Well spent in such a strife may earn indeed,
 And for a time ensure to his loved land
 The sweets of liberty and equal laws,
 But martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,
 And win it with more pain Their blood is shed
 In confirmation of the noblest claim,
 Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
 To walk with God, to be divinely free,
 To soar, and to anticipate the skies!
 Yet few remember them They lived unknown
 Till persecution dragg'd them into fame
 And chased them up to heaven Their ashes flew
 —No marble tells us whither With their names
 No bard embalms and sanctifies his song,
 And history, so warm on meaner themes,
 Is cold on this She execrates indeed
 The tyranny that doom'd them to the fire,
 But gives the glorious sufferers little praise¹

He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,

¹ See Hume —C.

And all are slaves beside There's not a chain
 That hellish foea confed'rate for his harm
 Can wind around him, but he casts it off
 With as much ease as Samson his green wither
 He looks abroad into the varied field
 Of Nature, and, though poor perhaps compared
 With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
 Calls the delightful scen'ry all his own
 His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
 And the resplendent rivers His t' enjoy
 With a propriety that none can feel
 But who, with filial confidence inspired,
 Can lift to heav'n an unpresumptuous eye,
 And smiling say—My Father made them all!
 Are they not his by a peculiar right,
 And by an emphasis of int'rest his,
 Whose eve they fill with tears of holy joy.
 Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind
 With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love
 That plann'd, and built, and still upholds a world
 So clothed with beauty, for rebellious man?
 Yes—ye may fill your garners, ye that reap
 The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
 In senseless riot, but ye will not find
 In feast or in the chase, in song or dance
 A liberty like his, who, unimpair'd
 Of usurpation, end to no man's wrong,
 Appropriates nature as his Father's work,
 And has a richer use of yours, than you
 He is indeed a freeman Free by birth
 Of no mean city, plann'd or ere the hills
 Were built, the fountains open'd, or the sea
 With all his roaring multitude of waves
 His freedom is the same in ev'ry state,
 And no condition of this changeful life
 So manifold in cares, whose ev'ry day
 Brings its own evil with it, makes it less
 For he has wings that neither sickness, pain,
 Nor penury, can cripple or confine
 No nook so narrow but he spreads them there
 With ease, and is at large Th' oppressor holds
 His body bound, but knows not what a range
 His spirit takes unconscious of a chain,
 And that to bind him is a vain attempt,
 Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells.

Acquaint¹ thyself with God if thou wouldst taste
 His works Admitted once to his embrace,
 Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before,
 Thine eye shall be instructed, and thine heart,
 Made pure, shall relish, with divine delight
 Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought
 Brutes graze the mountain top with faces prone,
 And eyes intent upon the scanty herb
 It yields them, or, recumbent on its brow,
 Ruminates, heedless of the scene outspread
 Beneath, beyond, and stretching far away
 From inland regions to the distant main
 Man views it and admires, but rests content
 With what he views The landscape has his praise,
 But not its Author Unconcern'd who form'd
 The paradise he sees, he finds it such,
 And such well-pleased to find it, asks no more
 Not so the mind that has been touch'd from heav'n,
 And in the school of sacred wisdom taught
 To read his wonders, in whose thought the world,
 Fair as it is, existed ere it was
 Not for its own sake merely, but for His
 Much more who fashion'd it, he gives it praise,
 Praise that from earth resulting as it ought
 To earth's acknowledged sov'reign, finds at once
 Its only just proprietor in Him.
 The soul that sees him, or receives sublimed
 New faculties, or learns at least t'employ
 More worthily the pow'rs she own'd before,
 Discerns in all things what, with stupid gaze
 Of ignorance, till then she overlook'd,
 A ray of heav'nly light gilding all forms
 Terrestrial, in the vast and the minute,
 The unambiguous footsteps of the God
 Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
 And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds
 Much conversant with heav'n, she often holds
 With those fair ministers of light to man,
 That fill the skies nightly with silent pomp,
 Sweet conference, inquires what strains were they
 With which heav'n rang, when ev'ry star, in haste
 To gratulate the new-created earth,
 Sent forth a voice, and all the sons of God
 Shouted for joy — "Tell me, ye shining hosts
 That navigate a sea that knows no storms,

Beneath a vault unsullied with a cloud,
 If from your elevation, whence ye view
 Distinctly scenes invisible to man,
 And systems of whose birth no tidings yet
 Have reach'd this nether world, ye spy a race
 Favour'd as ours, transgressors from the womb,
 And hasting to a grave, yet doom'd to rise,
 And to possess a brighter heav'n than yours?
 As one who, long detain'd on foreign shores,
 Pants to return, and when he sees afar
 His country's weather-bleach'd and batter'd rocks
 From the green wave emerging, darts an eye
 Radiant with joy towards the happy land,
 So I with animated hopes behold,
 And many an aching wish, your beamy fires,
 That show like beacons in the blue abyss,
 Ordain'd to guide th' embodied spirit home
 From toilsome life, to never-ending rest
 Love kindles as I gaze I feel desires
 That give assurance of their own success,
 And that infused from heav'n must thither tend "

So reads he nature whom the lamp of truth
 Illuminates Thy lamp, mysterious Word!
 Which whoso sees, no longer wanders lost
 With intellects bemazed in endless doubt,
 But runs the road of wisdom Thou hast built,
 With means that were not till by thee employ'd,
 Worlds that had never been, hadst thou in strength
 Been less, or less benevolent than strong
 They are thy witnesses, who speak thy pow'r
 And goodness infinite, but speak in ears
 That hear not, or receive not their report
 In vain thy creatures testify of thee
 Till thou proclaim thyself Theirs is indeed
 A teaching voice, but 'tis the praise of thine
 That whom it teaches it makes prompt to learn,
 And with the boon gives talents for its use
 Till thou art heard, imaginations vain
 Possess the heart, and fables, false as hell,
 Yet deem'd oracular, lure down to death
 The uninstruct'd and heedless souls of men
 We give to chance, blind chance, ourselves as blind,
 The glory of thy work, which yet appears
 Perfect and unimpeachable of blame,
 Challenging human scrutiny, and proved

Then skilful most when most severely judg'd
 But chance is not, or is not where thou reign'st
 Thy providence forbids that sickle pow'r
 (If pow'r she be that works but to confound)
 To mix her wild vagaries with thy laws
 Yet thus we dote, refusing, while we can,
 Instruction, and inventing to ourselves
 Gods such as guilt makes welcome, gods that sleep,
 Or disregard our follies, or that sit
 Amused spectators of this bustling stage.
 Thee we reject, unable to abide
 Thy purity, till pure as thou art pure,
 Made such by thee, we love thee for that cause
 For which we shunn'd and hat'd thee before
 Then we are free—thou liberty like day,
 Breaks on the soul and by a flash from heav'n
 Fires all the faculties with glorious joy
 A voice is heard that mortal ears hear not
 Till thou hast touch'd them, 'tis the voice of song,
 A loud Hosanna sent from all thy works,
 Which he that hears it, with a shout repeats,
 And adds his rapture to the gen'ral praise
 In that blest moment, Nature, throwing wide
 Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile
 The Author of her beauties, who, retired
 Behind his own creation, works unseen
 By the impure and hears his pow'r denied
 Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
 Their only point of rest eternal Word!
 From thee departing, they are lost and rove
 At random, without honour, hope, or peace
 From thee is all that soothes the life of man,
 His high endeavour, and his glad success,
 His strength to suffer, and his will to serve
 But oh thou bounteous Giver of all good,
 Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown!
 Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor,
 And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away

BOOK VI.

THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

ARGUMENT.

Bells at a distance—Their effect—A fine noon in winter—A sheltered walk—Meditation better than books—Our familiarity with the course of nature makes it appear less wonderful than it is—The transformation that Spring effects in a shrubbery described—A mistake concerning the course of nature corrected—God maintains it by an unremitted act—The amusements fashionable at this hour of the day reproved—Animals happy, a delightful sight—Origin of cruelty to animals—That it is a great crime proved from Scripture—That proof illustrated by a tale—A line drawn between the lawful and the unlawful destruction of them—Their good and useful properties insisted on—Apology for the encomiums bestowed by the author on animals—Instances of man's extravagant praise of man—The groans of the creation shall have an end—A view taken of the restoration of all things—An invocation and an invitation of Him who shall bring it to pass—The retired man vindicated from the charge of uselessness—Conclusion.

THERE IS in souls a sympathy with sounds,
 And as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleas'd
 With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave,
 Some chord in unison with what we hear
 Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies
 How soft the music of those village bells
 Falling at intervals upon the ear
 In cadence sweet! now dying all away,
 Now pealing loud again and louder still,
 Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on
 With easy force it opens all the cells
 Where mem'ry slept Wherever I have heard
 A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
 And with it all its pleasures and its pains
 Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
 That in a few short moments I retrace
 (As in a map the voyager his course)
 The windings of my way through many years.
 Short as in retrospect the journey seems,
 It seem'd not always short, the rugged path,
 And prospect oft so dreary and forlorn

Moved many a sigh at its disheart'ning length,
 Yet feeling present evils, while the past
 Faintly impress the mind, or not at all,
 How readily we wish time spent revoked,
 That we might try the ground again, where once
 (Through inexperience as we now perceive)
 We miss'd that happiness we might have found
 Some friend is gone, perhaps his son's best friend
 A father, whose authority, in show
 When most severe, and must'ring all its force,
 Was but the graver countenance of love,
 Whose favour, like the clouds of spring, might low'r
 And utter now and then an awful voice,
 But had a blessing in its darkest frown,
 Threat'ning at once and nourishing the plant
 We loved, but not enough, the gentle hand
 That rear'd us At a thoughtless age allured
 By ev'ry gilded folly, we renounced
 His shelt'ring side, and wilfully forewent
 That converse which we now in vain regret
 How gladly would the man recall to life
 The boy's neglected sire! a mother too
 That softer friend, perhaps more gladly still,
 Might he demand them at the gates of death
 Sorrow has since they went subdued and tam'd
 The playful humour, he could now endure
 (Himself grown sober in the vale of tears)
 And feel a parent's presence no restraint
 But not to understand a treasure's worth
 Till time has stol'n away the slighted good,
 Is cause of half the poverty we feel,
 And makes the world the wilderness it is
 The few that pray at all pray oft amiss,
 And, seeking grace t' improve the prize they hold,
 Would urge a wiser suit than asking more

The night was winter in his roughest mood,
 The morning sharp and clear, but now at noon
 Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
 And where the woods fence off the northern blast,
 The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
 And has the warmth of May The vault is blue
 Without a cloud, and white without a speck
 The dazzling splendour of the scene below
 Again the harmony comes o'er the vale,
 And through the trees I view th' embattled tow'r

Whence all the music I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings, as I tread
The walk still verdant under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches overarch the glade
The roof, though moveable through all its length,
As the wind sways it, has yet well sufficed,
And, intercepting in their silent fall
The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me
No noise is here, or none that hinders thought
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes and more than half suppress'd
Pleased with his solitude, and sitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendant drops of ice,
That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here
May think down hours to moments Here the heart
May give an useful lesson to the head,
And learning wiser grow without his books
Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have oftentimes no connexion Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men,
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
Till smooth'd and squared and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems to enrich
Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more
Books are not seldom talismans and spells
By which the magic art of shrewder wits
Holds an unthinking multitude in thrall'd.
Some to the fascination of a name
Surrender judgment hoodwink'd. Some the style
Infatuates, and, through labyrinths and wilds
Of error, leads them by a tune entranced
While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear
The insupportable fatigue of thought,
And swallowing therefore without pause or choice
The total grist unsifted, husks and all
But trees, and rivulets whose rapid course
Defies the check of winter, haunts of deer,
And sheep walks populous with bleating lambs,

And lanes, in which the primrose ere her time
 Peeps through the moss that clothes the hawthorn root,
 Deceive no student Wisdom there, and truth,
 Not shy as in the world, and to be won
 By slow solicitation, seize at once
 The roving thought, and fix it on themselves

What prodigies can pow'r divine perform
 More grand, than it produces year by year,
 And all in sight of inattentive man?
 Familiar with th' effect we slight the cause,
 And in the constancy of nature's course,
 The regular return of genial months,
 And renovation of a faded world,
 See nought to wonder at Should God again,
 As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race
 Of the undeviating and punctual sun,
 How would the world admire! but speaks it less
 An agency divine, to make him know
 His moment when to sink and when to rise
 Age after age, than to arrest his course
 All we behold is miracle, but, seen
 So duly, all is miracle in vain
 Where now the vital energy that moved,
 While summer was, the pure and subtle lymph
 Through th' imperceptible meand'ring veins
 Of leaf and flow'r? It sleeps, and th' icy touch
 Of unprolific winter has impress'd
 A cold stagnation on th' intestine tide
 But let the months go round, a few short months,
 And all shall be restored These naked shoots,
 Barren as lances, among which the wind
 Makes wintry music, sighing as it goes,
 Shall put their graceful foliage on again,
 And more aspiring and with ampler spread
 Shall boast new charms, and more than they have lost.
 Then, each in its peculiar honours clad,
 Shall publish even to the distant eye
 Its family and tribe Laburnum rich
 In streaming gold, syringa iv'ry pure,
 The scented and the scentless rose, this red
 And of a humbler growth, the other¹ tall,
 And throwing up into the darkest gloom
 Of neighb'ring cypress, or more sable yew,

¹ The Guelder rose.—Q.

Her silver globes, light as the foamy surf
 That the wind severs from the broken wave,
 The lilac various in array, now white,
 Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
 With purple spikes pyramidal, as if
 Studious of ornament, yet unresolved
 Which hue she most approved, she chose them all;
 Copious of flow'rs the woodbine, pale and wan,
 But well compensating their sickly looks
 With never-cloying odours, early and late,
 Hypericum all bloom, so thick a swarm
 Of flow'rs like flies, clothing her slender rods,
 That scarce a leaf appears, mezereon too,
 Though leafless, well attired, and thick beset
 With blushing wreaths investing ev'ry spray,
 Althæa with the purple eye, the broom,
 Yellow and bright as bullion unalloy'd
 Her blossoms, and luxuriant above all
 The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
 The deep dark green of whose unvarnish'd leaf
 Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more
 The bright profusion of her scatter'd stars —
 These have been, and these shall be in their day,
 And all this uniform uncolour'd scene
 Shall be dismantled of its fleecy load,
 And flush into variety again
 From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
 Is Nature's progress when she lectures man
 In heav'nly truth, evincing, as she makes
 The grand transition, that there lives and works
 A soul in all things, and that soul is God
 The beauties of the wilderness are his,
 That make so gay the solitary place
 Where no eye sees them. And the fairer forms
 That cultivation glories in, are his
 He sets the bright procession on its way,
 And marshals all the order of the year
 He marks the bounds which winter may not pass,
 And blunts his pointed fury In its case,
 Russet and rude, folds up the tender gerin
 Uninjured, with inimitable art,
 And, ere one flow'ry season fades and dies,
 Designs the blooming wonders of the next.

Some say that in the origin of things,

When all creation started into birth,
 The infant elements received a law
 From which they swerve not since, that under force
 Of that controlling ordinance they move,
 And need not his immediate hand, who first
 Prescribed their course, to regulate it now
 Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
 Th' incumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
 The great Artificer of all that moves
 The stress of a continual act, the pain
 Of unremitted vigilance and care,
 As too laborious and severe a task.
 So man the moth is not afraid, it seems,
 To span Omnipotence, and measure might
 That know no measure, by the scanty rule
 And standard of his own, that is to-day,
 And is not, ere to morrow's sun go down
 But how should matter occupy a charge
 Dull as it is, and satisfy a law
 So vast in its demands, unless impell'd
 To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,
 And under pressure of some conscious cause ?
 The Lord of all, himself through all diffused,
 Sustains and is the life of all that lives
 Nature is but a name for an effect
 Whose cause is God He feeds the secret fire
 By which the mighty process is maintain'd,
 Who sleeps not, is not weary, in whose sight
 Slow-circling ages are as transient days,
 Whose work is without labour, whose designs
 No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts,
 And whose beneficence no charge exhausts.
 Him blind antiquity profaned, not served,
 With self-taught rites and under various names
 Female and male, Pomona, Pales, Pan,
 And Flora and Vertumnus, peopling earth
 With tutelary goddesses and gods
 That were not, and commending as they would
 To each some province, garden, field, or grove
 But all are under one One spirit—His
 Who bore the platted thorns with bleeding brows,
 Rules universal nature Not a flow'r
 But shows some touch in freckle, streak, or stain,
 Of his unrivall'd pencil He inspires
 Their balmy odours and imparts their hues,

And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes,
In grains as countless as the sea-side sands,
The forms with which he sprinkles all the earth.
Happy who walks with him! whom, what he finds
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flow'r,
Or what he views of beautiful or grand
In nature, from the broad majestic oak
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts with remembrance of a present God
His presence, who made all so fair, perceived,
Makes all still fairer As with him no scene
Is dreary, so with him all seasons please
Though winter had been none, had man been true,
And earth be punish'd for its tenant's sake,
Yet not in vengeance, as this smiling sky
So soon succeeding such an angry night,
And these dissolving snows, and this clear stream,
Recov'ring fast its liquid music, prove

Who then, that has a mind well strung and tuned
To contemplation, and within his reach
A scene so friendly to his fav'rite task,
Would waste attention at the chequer'd board,
His host of wooden warriors to and fro
Marching and counter-marching, with an eye
As fixt as marble, with a forehead ridged
And furrow'd into storms, and with a hand
Trembling, as if eternity were hung
In balance on his conduct of a pin?
Nor envies he aught more their idle sport,
Who pant with application misapplied
To trivial toys, and, pushing iv'ry balls
Across the velvet level, feel a joy
Akin to rapture, when the bauble finds
It's destined goal of difficult access
Nor deems he wiser him, who gives his noon
To Miss, the Mercer's plague, from shop to shop
Wand'ring, and litt'ring with unfolded silks
The polish'd counter, and approving none,
Or promising with smiles to call again
Nor him, who, by his vanity seduced,
And sooth'd into a dream that he discerns
The difference of a Guido from a daub,
Frequents the crowded auction Station'd there
As duly as the Langford of the show,

With glass at eye, and catalogue in hand,
 And tongue accomplish'd in the fulsome cant
 And pedantry that cockcombs learn with ease,
 Oft as the price deciding hammer falls
 He notes it in his book, then raps his box,
 Swears 'tis a bargain, rails at his hard fate
 That he has let it pass—but never bids

Here unmolested, through whatever sign
 The sun proceeds, I wander, neither mist,
 Nor freezing sky, nor sultry, chieeking me,
 Nor stranger intermeddling with my joy
 Ev'n in the spring and play-time of the year
 That calls the unwonted villager abroad
 With all her little ones, a sportive train,
 To gather king cups in the yellow mead,
 And prank their hair with daisies, or to pick
 A cheap but wholesome salad from the brook,
 These shades are all my own The tim'rous hare,
 Grown so familiar with her frequent guest,
 Scaree shuns me, and the stock-dove unalarm'd
 Sits cooing in the pine-tree, nor suspends
 His long love ditty for my near approach
 Drawn from his refuge in some lonely elm
 That age or injury has hollow'd deep,
 Where on his bed of wool and matted leaves
 He has outslept the winter, ventures forth
 To frisk awhile, and bask in the warm sun,
 The squirrel, flippant, pert, and full of play
 He sees me, and at once, swift as a bird,
 Ascends the neighb'ring beech, there whisks his brush,
 And perks his ears, and stamps and scolds aloud,
 With all the prettiness of feign'd alarm,
 And anger insignificantly fierce

The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
 For human fellowship, as being void
 Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike
 To love and friendship both, that is not pleased
 With sight of animals enjoying life,
 Nor feels their happiness augment his own
 The bounding fawn that darts across the glade
 When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,
 And spirits buoyant with excess of glee,
 The horse, as wanton and almost as fleet,

That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,
Then stops and snorts, and throwing high his heels
Starts to the voluntary race again,
The very kine that gambol at high noon,
The total herd receiving first from one,
That leads the dance, a summons to be gay,
Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth
Their efforts, yet resolved with one consent
To give such act and utterance as they may
To ecstasy too big to be suppress'd—
These, and a thousand images of bliss,
With which kind nature graces ev'ry scene
Where cruel man defeats not her design,
Impart to the benevolent, who wish
All that are capable of pleasure pleased,
A far superior happiness to theirs,
The comfort of a reasonable joy

Man scarce had risen, obedient to His call
Who form'd him from the dust, his future grave,
When he was crown'd as never king was since
God set the diadem upon his head,
And angel choirs attended Wond'ring stood
The new-made monarch, while before him pass'd,
All happy and all perfect in their kind,
The creatures, summon'd from their various haunts
To see their sov'reign, and confess his sway
Vast was his empire, absolute his pow'r,
Or bounded only by a law whose force
'Twas his sublimest privilege to feel
And own, the law of universal love
He ruled with meekness, they obey'd with joy
No cruel purpose lurk'd within his heart,
And no distrust of his intent in theirs
So Eden was a scene of harmless sport,
Where kindness on his part who ruled the whole
Begot a tranquil confidence in all,
And fear as yet was not, nor cause for fear
But sin marr'd all, and the revolt of man,
That source of evils not exhausted yet,
Was punish'd with revolt of his from him
Garden of God, how terrible the change
Thy groves and lawns then witness'd ev'ry heart,
Each animal of ev'ry name, conceived
A jealousy and an instinctive fear,
And, conscious of some danger, either fled

Precipitate the loathed abode of man,
 Or growl'd defiance in such angry sort,
 As taught him too to tremble in his turn.
 Thus harmony and family accord
 Were driv'n from Paradise, and in that hour
 The seeds of cruelty, that since have swell'd
 To such gigantic and enormous growth,
 Were sown in human nature's fruitful soil.
 Hence date the persecution and the pain
 That man inflicts on all inferior kinds,
 Regardless of their plaints To make him sport,
 To gratify the frenzy of his wrath,
 Or his base gluttony, are causes good
 And just, in his account, why bird and beast
 Should suffer torture, and the streams be dyed
 With blood of their inhabitants impaled.
 Earth groans beneath the burden of a war
 Waged with defenceless innocence, while he,
 Not satisfied to prey on all around,
 Adds tenfold bitterness to death by pang
 Needless, and first torments ere he devours.
 Now happiest they that occupy the scenes
 The most remote from his abhorr'd resort,
 Whom once as delegate of God on earth
 They fear'd, and as his perfect image loved.
 The wilderness is theirs with all its caves,
 Its hollow glens, its thickets, and its plains
 Unvisited by man There they are free,
 And howl and roar as likes them, uncontroll'd,
 Nor ask his leave to slumber or to play
 Nor to the tyrant, if he dare intrude
 Within the confines of their wild domain,
 The lion tells him—I am monarch here—
 And if he spares him, spares him on the terms
 Of royal mercy, and through gen'rous scorn
 To rend a victim trembling at his foot
 In measure, as by force of instinct drawn,
 Or by necessity constrain'd, they live
 Dependent upon man, those in his fields,
 These at his crib, and some beneath his roof.
 They prove too often at how dear a rate
 He sells protection. Witness, at his foot
 The spaniel dying for some venial fault,
 Under dissection of the knotted scourge,
 Witness, the patient ox, with stripes and yells
 Driven to the slaughter, goaded as he runs

To madness, while the savage at his heels
 Laughs at the frantic suff'rer's fury spent
 Upon the guiltless passenger o'erthrown
 He too is witness, noblest of the train
 That wait on man, the flight-performing horse
 With unsuspecting readiness he takes
 His murd'rer on his back, and, push'd all day,
 With bleeding sides, and flanks that heave for life,
 To the far-distant goal, arrives and dies
 So little mercy shows who needs so much !
 Does law, so jealous in the cause of man,
 Denounce no doom on the delinquent ? None
 He lyes, and o'er his brimming beaker boasts
 (As if barbarity were high desert)
 'Th' inglorious feat, and, clamorous in praise
 Of the poor brute, seems wisely to suppose
 The honours of his matchless horse his own
 But many a crime, deem'd innocent on earth,
 Is register'd in heav'n, and these, no doubt,
 Have each their record, with a curse annex'd.
 Man may dismiss compassion from his heart,
 But God will never When he charged the Jew
 T' assist his foe's down-fallen beast to rise,
 And when the bush-exploring boy that seized
 The young, to let the parent bird go free,¹
 Proved he not plainly that his meaner works
 Are yet his care, and have an interest all,
 All, in the universal Father's love
 On Noah,² and in him on all mankind,
 The charter was conferr'd by which we hold
 The flesh of animals in fee, and claim,
 O'er all we feed on, power of life and death
 But read the instrument, and mark it well,
 'Th' oppression of a tyrannous control
 Can find no warrant there Feed then, and yield
 Thanks for thy food Carnivorous, through sin,
 Feed on the slain, but spare the living brute

The Governor of all, himself to all
 So bountiful, in whose attentive ear
 The unfledged raven and the lion's whelp
 Plead not in vain for pity on the pangs
 Of hunger unassuaged, has interposed,
 Not seldom, his avenging arm, to smite
 'Th' injurious trampler upon nature's law,

Deuteronomy xxii 6, 7

¹ Genesis ix 3, 8.

That claims forbearance even for a brute
 He hates the hardness of a Belsham's heart;
 And, prophetic as he was, he might not strike
 The blameless animal without rebuke.
 On which he rode Her opportune offence
 Saved him, or th' unrelenting scer had died.
 He sees that human equity is slack
 To interfere, though in so just a cause,
 And makes the task his own, inspiring dumb
 And helpless victims with a sense so keen
 Of injury, with such knowledge of their strength,
 And such sagacity to take revenge,
 That oft the beast has seem'd to judge the man
 An ancient, not a legendary tale,
 By one of sound intelligence rehearsed,
 (If such, who plead for Providence, may seem
 In modern eyes,) shall make the doctrine clear

Where England stretch'd towards the setting sun,
 Narrow and long, o'erlooks the western wave,
 Dwelt young Micagathus, a scorner he
 Of God and goodness, atheist in ostent,
 Vicious in act, in temper savage-fierce
 He journey'd, and his chance was, as he went,
 To join a trav'ller of far different note,—
 Evander famed for piety, for years
 Deserving honour, but for wisdom more
 Fame had not left the venerable man
 A stranger to the manners of the youth
 Whose face too, was familiar to his view
 Their way was on the margin of the land,
 O'er the green summit of the rocks whose base
 Beats back the roaring surge scarce heard so high.
 The charity that warm'd his heart was moved
 At sight of the man monster With a smile
 Gentle and affable and full of grace,
 As fearful of offending whom he wish'd
 Much to persuade, he plied his ear with truths
 Not harshly thunder'd forth or rudely press'd
 But, like his purpose, gracious, kind and sweet.
 And dost thou dream, th' impenetrable man
 Exclaim'd, that me the lullabies of age,
 And fantasies of dotards such as thou,
 Can cheat, or move a moment's fear in me?
 Mark now the proof I give thee, that the brave

Need no such aids as superstition lends
To steel their hearts against the dread of death
He spoke, and to the precipice at hand
Push'd with a madman's fury Fancy shrinks,
And the blood thrills and curdles at the thought
Of such a gulf as he design'd his grave
But though the felon on his back could dare
The dreadful leap, more rational, his steed
Declined the death, and wheeling swiftly round,
Or ere his hoof had press'd the crumbling verge,
Baffled his rider, saved against his will
The frenzy of the brain may be redress'd
By med'cine well applied, but without grace
The heart's insanity admits no cure
Enraged the more by what might have reform'd
His horrible intent, again he sought
Destruction, with a zeal to be destroy'd,
With sounding whip and rowels dyed in blood
But still in vain The Providence that meant
A longer date to the far nobler beast,
Spared yet again th' ignobler for his sake
And now, his prowess proved, and his sincere,
Incurable obduracy evinced,
His rage grew cool, and, pleased perhaps t' have earn'd
So cheaply the renown of that attempt,
With looks of some complacence he resumed
His road, deriding much the blank amaze
Of good Evander, still where he was left
Fixt motionless, and petrified with dread
So on they fared, discourse on other themes
Ensuing, seem'd t' obliterate the past,
And tamer far for so much fury shown,
(As is the course of rash and fiery men,)
The rude companion smiled as if transform'd
But 'twas a transient calm A storm was near,
An unsuspected storm His hour was come
The impious challenger of pow'r divine
Was now to learn that Heav'n, though slow to wrath,
Is never with impunity defied
His horse, as he had caught his master's mood,
Snorting, and starting into sudden rage,
Unbidden, and not now to be controll'd,
Rush'd to the cliff, and having reach'd it, stood
At once the shock unseated him, he flew
Sheer c'er the craggy barrier, and, immersed
Deep in the flood, found, when he sought it not,

The death he had deserved, and died alone.
 So God wrought double justice, made the fool
 The victim of his own tremendous choice,
 And taught a brute the way to safe revenge.

I would not enter on my list of friends
 (Though graced with polish'd manners and fine sense
 Yet wanting sensibility) the man
 Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm
 An inadvertent step may crush the snail
 That crawls at evening in the public path,
 But he that has humanity, forewarn'd,
 Will tread aside, and let the reptile live
 The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight
 And charged perhaps with venom, that intrudes
 A visitor unwelcome into scenes
 Sacred to neatness and repose, th' alcove,
 The chamber, or refectory may die¹
 A necessary act incurs no blame
 Not so when, held within their proper bounds
 And guiltless of offence, they range the air,
 Or take their pastime in the spacious field.
 There they are privileged, and he that hunts
 Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,
 Disturbs the economy of nature's realm,
 Who, when she form'd, design'd them an abode
 The sum is this if man's convenience, health,
 Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
 Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs
 Else they are all—the meanest things that are,
 As free to live and to enjoy that life,
 As God was free to form them at the first,
 Who in his sov'reign wisdom made them all
 Ye, therefore, who love mercy, teach your sons
 To love it too The spring-time of our years
 Is soon dishonour'd and defiled in most
 By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand
 To check them But, alas! none sooner shoots,
 If unrestrain'd, into luxuriant growth,
 Than cruelty, most devilish of them all.
 Mercy to him that shows it, is the rule
 And righteous limitation of its act,
 By which Heav'n moves in pard'ning guilty man;

¹ We have Cowper's account, in prose and verse, of his own summary sentence and execution upon a viper, which had found its way into the house

And he that shows none, being ripe in years,
And conscious of the outrage he commits,
Shall seek it, and not find it in his turn

Distinguish'd much by reason, and still more
By our capacity of grace divine,
From creatures that exist but for our sake,
Which having served us, perish, we are held
Accountable, and God, some future day,
Will reckon with us roundly for th' abuse
Of what he deems no mean or trivial trust
Superior as we are, they yet depend
Not more on human help, than we on theirs
Their strength, or speed, or vigilance, were giv'n
In aid of our defects In some are found
Such teachable and apprehensive parts,
That man's attainments in his own concerns,
Match'd with th' expertness of the brutes in theirs,
Are oftentimes vanquish'd and thrown far behind
Some show that nice sagacity of smell,
And read with such discernment, in the port
And figure of the man, his secret aim,
That oft we owe our safety to a skill
We could not teach, and must despair to learn
But learn we might, if not too proud to stoop
To quadruped instructors, many a good
And useful quality, and virtue too,
Rarely exemplified among ourselves,
Attachment never to be wean'd, or changed
By any change of fortune, proof alike
Against unkindness, absence, and neglect,
Fidelity, that neither bribe nor threat
Can move or warp, and gratitude for small
And trivial favours, lasting as the life,
And glist'ning even in the dying eye

Man praises man Desert in arts or arms
Wins public honour, and ten thousand sit
Patiently present at a sacred song,
Commemoration-mad, content to hear
(Oh wonderful effect of music's pow'r!)
Messiah's eulogy, for Handel's sake!
But less, methinks, than sacrilege might serve—
(For was it less? What heathen would have dared
To strip Jove's statue of his oaken wreath

* In 1784-5 Mr Newton preached a course of sermons upon this subject
and published them in 1780

And hang it up in honour of a man ?
 Much less might serve, when all that we design
 Is but to gratify an itching ear,
 And give the day to a musician's praise
 Remember Handel ! who, that was not born
 Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
 Or can, the more than Homer of his age ?
 Yes—we remember him, and, while we praise
 A talent so divine, remember too
 That His most holy Book from whom it came
 Was never meant, was never used before
 To buckram out the memory of a man
 But hush !—the muse perhaps is too severe,
 And with a gravity beyond the size
 And measure of th' offence, rebukes a deed
 Less impious than absurd, and owing more
 To want of judgment than to wrong design.
 So in the chapel of old Ely House,
 When wandring Charles, who meant to be the third,
 Had fled from William, and the news was fresh,
 The simple clerk, but loyal, did announce,
 And eke did rear right merrily, two staves,
 Sung to the praise and glory of King George
 —Man praises man, and Garrick's memory next,
 When time has somewhat mellow'd it, and made
 The idol of our worship while he lived
 The god of our idolatry once more,
 Shall have its altar, and the world shall go
 In pilgrimage to bow before his shrine
 The theatre too small, shall suffocate
 Its squeezed contents, and more than it admits
 Shall sigh at their exclusion, and return
 Ungratified. For there some noble lord
 Shall stuff his shoulders with King Richard's bunch,
 Or wrap himself in Hamlet's inky cloak,
 And strut and storm, and straddle, stamp, and star,
 To show the world how Garrick did not act
 For Garrick was a worshipper himself,
 He drew the liturgy and framed the rites
 And solemn ceremonial of the day,
 And called the world to worship on the banks
 Of Avon famed in song. Ah ! pleasant proof
 That piety has still in human hearts
 Some place, a spark or two not yet extinct
 The mulberry tree was hung with blooming wreaths
 The mulberry tree stood centre of the dance,

The mulb'ry-tree was hymn'd with dulcet airs,
 And from his touchwood trunk the mulb'ry-tree
 Supplied such relics, as devotion holds
 Still sacred, and preserves with pious care
 So 'twas a hallow'd time decorum reign'd,
 And mirth without offence No few return'd
 Doubtless much edified, and all refresh'd
 —Man praises man The rabble all alive,
 From tippling-benches, cellars, stalls, and styes,
 Swarm in the streets The statesman of the day,
 A pompous and slow-moving pageant comes,
 Some shout him, and some hang upon his ear
 To gaze in his eyes and bless him Maidens wave
 Their kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy,
 While others not so satisfied unhorse
 The gilded equipage, and, turning loose
 His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve
 Why? what has charm'd them? Hath he saved the state?
 No Doth he purpose its salvation? No
 Enchanting novelty, that moon at full,
 That finds out every crevice of the head
 That is not sound and perfect, hath in theirs
 Wrought this disturbance But the wane is near,
 And his own cattle must suffice him soon
 Thus idly do we waste the breath of praise,
 And dedicate a tribute, in its use
 And just direction sacred, to a thing
 Doom'd to the dust, or lodged already there
 Encomium in old time was poets' work,
 But, poets having lavishly long since
 Exhausted all materials of the art,
 The task now falls into the public hand,
 And I, contented with a humble theme,
 Have pour'd my stream of panegyric down
 The vale of nature, where it creeps and winds
 Among her lovely works, with a secure
 And unambitious course, reflecting clear
 If not the virtues yet the worth of brutes
 And I am recompensed, and deem the toils
 Of poetry not lost, if verse of mine
 May stand between an animal and woe,
 And teach one tyrant pity for his drudge
 The groans of nature in this nether world,
 Which Heav'n has heard for ages, have an end.
 Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
 Whose fire was kindled at the prophets' lamp,

The time of rest, the promised sabbath, comes.
 Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh
 Fulfill'd their tardy and disastrous course
 Over a sinful world, and what remains
 Of this tempestuous state of human things,
 Is merely as the working of a sea
 Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest
 For He, whose ear the winds are, and the clouds
 The dust that waits upon his sultry march,
 When sin hath moved him, and his wrath is hot,
 Shall visit earth in mercy, shall descend
 Propitious, in his chariot paved with love,
 And what his storms have blasted and defaced
 For man's revolt, shall with a smile repair

Sweet is the harp of prophecy, too sweet
 Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch,
 Nor can the wonders it records be sung
 To meaner music, and not suffer loss
 But when a poet, or when one like me,
 Happy to rove among poetic flow'rs,
 Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last
 On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,
 Such is the impulse and the spur he feels
 To give it praise proportion'd to its worth,
 That not to attempt it, arduous as he deems
 The labour, were a task more arduous still

Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
 Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! which who can see,
 Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
 His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?
 Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
 And clothe all climes with beauty, the reproach
 Of barrenness is past The fruitful field
 Laughs with abundance, and the land once lean,
 Or fertile only in its own disgrace,
 Exults to see its thistly curse repeal'd.
 The various seasons woven into one,
 And that one season an eternal spring,
 The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,
 For there is none to covet, all are full.
 The lion and the hybbard¹ and the bear
 Graze with the fearless flocks² All bask at noon

¹ Spenser uses this name instead of the leopard.

² Isaiah lxx 25.

Together, or all gambol in the shade
 Of the same grove, and drink one common stream
 Antipathies are none No foe to man
 Lurks in the serpent now The mother sees,
 And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
 Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm.
 To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
 The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue
 All creatures worship man, and all mankind
 One Lord, one Father Error has no place;
 That creeping pestilence is driven away,
 The breath of heav'n has chased it In the heart
 No passion touches a discordant string,
 But all is harmony and love Disease
 Is not. The pure and uncontaminate blood
 Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age
 One song employs all nations, and all cry,
 "Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!"
 The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
 Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
 From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
 Till nation after nation taught the strain,
 Each rolls the rapturous Hosanna round
 Behold the measure of the promise fill'd,
 See Salem built, the labour of a God!
 Bright as a sun the sacred city shines,
 All kingdoms and all princes of the earth
 Flock to that light, the glory of all lands
 Flows into her, unbounded is her joy
 And endless her increase Thy rams are there
 Nebaioth,¹ and the flocks of Kedar there,
 The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,
 And Saba's spicy groves pay tribute there
 Praise is in all her gates Upon her walls,
 And in her streets, and in her spacious courts
 Is heard salvation Eastern Jara there
 Kneels with the native of the farthest West,
 And Æthiopia spreads abroad the hand,
 And worships Her report has travell'd forth
 Into all lands From every clime they come
 To see thy beauty and to share thy joy,
 O Sion! an assembly such as earth
 Saw never, such as heav'n stoops down to see.

¹ Nebaioth and Kedar, the sons of Ishmael, and progenitors of the Arabs, the prophetic scripture here alluded to, may be reasonably considered as representatives of the Gentile at large.—O

Thus heav'nward all things tend For all were
once

Perfect, and all must be at length restored.
So God has greatly purposed who would else
In his dishonour'd works himself endure
Dishonour, and be wrong'd without redress
Haste then, and wheel away a shatter'd world,
Ye slow-revolving seasons! We would see
(A sight to which our eyes are strangers yet)
A world that does not dread and hate his laws,
And suffer for its crime would learn how fair
The creature is that God pronounces good,
How pleasant in itself what pleases him.
Here ev'ry drop of honey hides a sting,
Worms wind themselves into our sweetest flow'rs,
And ev'n the joy, that haply some poor heart
Derives from heav'n, pure as the fountain is,
Is sullied in the stream, taking a taint
From touch of human lips, at best impure.
Oh for a world in principle as chaste
As this is gross and selfish! over which
Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway,
That govern all things here, should ring aside
The meek and modest truth, and forcing her
To seek a refuge from the tongue of strife
In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men.
Where violence shall never lift the sword,
Nor cunning justify the proud man's wrong,
Leaving the poor no remedy but tears
Where he that fills an office, shall esteem
Th' occasion it presents of doing good
More than the perquisite Where law shall speak
Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts,
And equity, not jealous more to guard
A worthless form, than to decide aright.
Where fashion shall not sanctify abuse,
Nor smooth good breeding (supplemental grace)
With lean performance ape the work of love

Come then, and added to thy many crowns
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
Thou who alone art worthy! it was thine
By ancient covenant, ere nature's birth,
And thou hast made it thine by purchase since,
And overpaid its value with thy blood
Thy saint's proclaim thee king; and in their hearts

Thy title is engraven with a pen,
 Dipt in the fountain of eternal love
 Thy saints proclaim thee king, and thy delay
 Gives courage to their foes, who, could they see
 The dawn of thy last advent, long desired,
 Would creep into the bowels of the hills,
 And flee for safety to the falling rocks
 The very spirit of the world is tired
 Of its own taunting question, ask'd so long,
 "Where is the promise of your Lord's approach?"
 The infidel has shot his bolts away,
 Till, his exhausted quiver yielding none,
 He gleams the blunted shafts that have recoil'd,
 And aims them at the shield of truth again
 The veil is rent, rent too by priestly hands,
 That hides divinity from mortal eyes,
 And all the mysteries to faith proposed,
 Insulted and reduced, are cast aside.
 As useless, to the moles and to the bats
 They now are deem'd the faithful and are praised,
 Who, constant only in rejecting thee,
 Deny thy Godhead with a martyr's zeal,
 And quit their office for their error's sake
 Blind and in love with darkness! yet ev'n these
 Worthy, compared with sycophants, who kneel
 Thy name adoring, and then preach thee man!
 So fares thy church But how thy church may fare,
 The world takes little thought, who will may preach,
 And what they will All pastors are alike
 To wand'ring sheep, resolved to follow none
 Two gods divide them all, Pleasure and Gain,
 For these they live, they sacrifice to these,
 And in their service wage perpetual war
 With conscience and with thee Lust in their hearts.
 And mischief in their hands, they roam the earth
 To prey upon each other, stubborn, fierce,
 High-minded, foaming out their own disgrace
 Thy prophets speak of such, and noting down
 The features of the last degen'rate times,
 Exhibit ev'ry lineament of these
 Come then, and added to thy many crowns
 Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,
 Due to thy last and most effectual work,
 Thy word fulfill'd, the conquest of

He is the happy man, whose life ev'n
 Shows somewhat of that happier life to come,
 Who, doom'd to an obscure but tranquil state,
 Is pleas'd with it, and, were he free to choose,
 Would make his fate his choice, whom peace, the
 Of virtue, and whom virtue, fruit of faith,
 Prepare for happiness, bespeak him one
 Content indeed to sojourn while he must
 Below the skies, but having there his home.
 The world o'erlooks him in her busy search
 Of objects more illustrious in her view;
 And occupied as earnestly as she,
 Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the world.
 She scorns his pleasures, for she knows them not
 He seeks not hers, for he has proved them vain.
 He cannot skim the ground like summer birds
 Pursuing gilded flies, and such he deems
 Her honours, her emoluments, her joys,
 Therefore in contemplation is his bliss,
 Whose pow'r is such, that whom she lifts from earth
 And shows him glories yet to be reveal'd.
 Not slothful he, though seeming unemploy'd,
 And censured oft as useless. Still, streams
 Oft water fairest meadows, and the bird
 That flutters least is longest on the wing.
 Ask him, indeed, what trophies he has raised,
 Or what achievements of immortal fame
 He purposes, and he shall answer—None.
 His warfare is within. There unsatiated
 His fervent spirit labours. There he fights,
 And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself,
 And never with ring wreaths, compared with which
 The laurels that a Cæsar reaps are weeds.
 Perhaps the self approving haughty world,
 That, as she sweeps him with her whistling silks,
 Scarce deigns to notice him, or if she see
 Deems him a cipher in the works of God,
 Receives advantage from his noiseless hours
 Of which she little dreams. Perhaps she owes
 Her sunshine and her rain, her blooming spring

1 "Then came brave Glory puffing by
 In silks that whistled, who but he?
 He scarce allow'd me half an eye;
 But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me."

And plenteous harvest, to the pray'r he makes,
 When, Isaac like, the solitary saint
 Walks forth to meditate at eventide,¹
 And think on her, who thinks not for herself
 Forgive him then, thou bustler in concerns
 Of little worth, and idler in the best,
 If, author of no mischief and some good,
 He seek his proper happiness by means
 That may advance, but cannot hinder thine
 Nor though he tread the secret path of life,
 Engage no notice, and enjoy much ease,
 Account him an incumbrance on the state,
 Receiving benefits, and rend'ring none
 His sphere though humble, if that humble sphere
 Shine with his fair example, and though small
 His influence, if that influence all be spent
 In soothing sorrow and in quenching strife,
 In aiding helpless indigence, in works
 From which at least a grateful few derive
 Some taste of comfort in a world of woe,
 Then let the supercilious great confess
 He serves his country, recompenses well
 The state beneath the shadow of whose vine
 He sits secure, and in the scale of life
 Holds no ignoble, though a slighted place
 The man, whose virtues are more felt than seen,
 Must drop, indeed, the hope of public praise,
 But he may boast, what few that win it can,
 That if his country stand not by his skill,
 At least his follies have not wrought her fall
 Polite refinement offers him in vain
 Her golden tube, through which a sensual world
 Draws gross impurity, and likes it well,
 The neat conveyance hiding all th' offence
 Not that he peevishly rejects a mode
 Because that world adopts it If it bear
 The stamp and clear impression of good sense,
 And be not costly more than of true worth,
 He puts it on, and for decorum sake
 Can wear it e'en as gracefully as she
 She judges of refinement by the eye,
 He by the test of conscience, and a heart

1 "And Isaac went out to meditate in the fields at the even tide; and he
 lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming"—
 Genesis xxv 63

Not soon deceived, aware that what is base
 No polish can make sterling, and that vice
 Though well perfumed and elegantly dress'd,
 Like an unburied carcass trick'd with flow'rs,
 Is but a garnish'd nuisance, fitter far
 For cleanly riddance than for fair attire
 So life glides smoothly and by stealth away,
 More golden than that age of fabled gold
 Renew'd in ancient song, not vex'd with care,
 Or stain'd with guilt, beneficent, approved
 Of God and man, and peaceful in its end.
 So glide my life away ! and so at last,
 My share of duties decently fulfill'd,
 May some disease, not tardy to perform
 Its destined office, yet with gentle stroke,
 Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat
 Beneath the turf that I have often trod
 It shall not grieve me, then, that once, when call'd
 To dress a Sofa with the flow'rs of verse,
 I play'd awhile, obedient to the fair,
 With that light task, but soon to please her more,
 Whom flow'rs alone I knew would little please,
 Let fall th' unfinished wreath, and roved for fruit,
 Roved far and gather'd much, some harsh, 'tis true
 Pick'd from the thorns and briars of reproof,
 But wholesome, well digested, grateful some
 To palates that can taste immortal truth,
 To insipid else, and sure to be despised.
 But all is in His hand whose praise I seek
 In vain the poet sings, and tho' the world hears,
 If he regard not, though divine the theme
 'Tis not in artful measures, in the chime
 And idle tinkling of a minstrel's lyre
 To charm his ear, whose eye is on the heart,
 Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,
 Whose approbation—prosper even mine !

1 "What there is of a religious cast in the volume I have 'brow'd towards
 the end of it, for two reasons—first that I might not revolt the reader at his
 entrance, and secondly that my best impressions might be made the last."—
 (To *Unwin*, October 10, 1781)

AN EPISTLE TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

DEAR JOSEPH,—five and twenty years ago—
 Alas, how time escapes!—'tis even so—
 With frequent intercourse and always sweet
 And always friendly we were wont to cheat¹
 A tedious hour—and now we never meet
 As some grave gentleman in Terence says,
 ('Twas therefore much the same in ancient days)
 Good lack, we know not what to-morrow brings—
 Strange fluctuation of all human things!
 True Changes will befall, and friends may part,
 But distance only cannot change the heart
 And were I call'd to prove th' assertion true,
 One proof should serve—a reference to you

Whence comes it then, that in the wane of life,
 Though nothing have occur'd to kindle strife,
 We find the friends we fancied we had won,
 Though num'rous once, reduced to few or none?
 Can gold grow worthless that has stood the touch?
 No Gold they seem'd, but they were never such
 Horatio's servant once, with bow and eringe,
 Swinging the parlour-door upon its lunge,
 Dreading a negative, and overawed
 Lest he should trespass, begg'd to go abroad
 Go, fellow!—whither?—turning short about—
 Nay Stay at home,—you're always going out
 'Tis but a step, sir, just at the street's end—
 For what?—An please you, sir, to see a friend.
 A friend! Horatio cried, and seem'd to start—
 Yea, marry shalt thou, and with all my heart—
 And fetch my cloak, for though the night be raw
 I'll see him too—the first I ever saw

I knew the man, and knew his nature mild,
 And was his plaything often when a child,
 But somewhat at that moment pinch'd him close,
 Else he was seldom bitter or morose
 Perhaps, his confidence just then betray'd,
 His grief might prompt him with the speech he made:

1 "Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
 Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
 Help waste a sullen day?"

Perhaps 'twas mere good humour gave it birth,
The harmless play of pleasantry and mirth
Howe'er it was, his language in my mind
Bespoke at least a man that knew mankind.

But not to moralize too much, and strain
To prove an evil of which all complain,
(I hate long arguments, verbosely spun)
One story more, dear Hill, and I have done
Once on a time, an emp'ror, a wise man,
No matter where, in China or Japan,
Decreed that whosoever should offend
Against the well known duties of a friend,
Convicted once, should ever after wear
But half a coat, and show his bosom bare,
The punishment importing this, no doubt,
That all was naught within and all sound out

Oh happy Britain! we have not to fear
Such hard and arbitrary measure here,
Else could a law, like that which I relate,
Once have the sanction of our triple state,
Some few that I have known in days of old
Would run most dreadful risk of catching cold
While you, my friend, whatever wind should blow
Might traverse England safely to and fro,
An honest man, close button'd to the chin,
Broad cloth without, and a warm heart within.

behind me. She was obedient, and very swift of foot, presently performed her journey, and set me down on the sixth form at Westminster. I fancied myself once more a schoolboy—a period of life in which, if I had never tasted true happiness, I was, at least, equally unacquainted with its contrary. No manufacturer of waking dreams ever succeeded better in his employment than I do. I can weave such a piece of tapestry in a few minutes as not only has all its charms of reality, but is embellished also with a variety of beauties, which, though they never existed, are more captivating than any that ever did, accordingly, I was a schoolboy in high favour with the master, received a silver groat for my exercise, and had the pleasure of seeing it sent from form to form, for the admiration of all who were able to understand it. He should have distinguished the Academy from the School, and have shown, at least, the sunny side of the system which he denounced. There is a good remark of Coleridge—"I am clear for Public Schools as the general rule, but, for particular children, private education may be proper. For the purpose of moving at ease in the best English society, the defect of a public education upon the plan of our great schools is hardly to be supplied." On the opposite argument, an observation of Johnson may be remembered. A gentleman had expressed a hope of curing the shyness of his son by a public school. "Sir," exclaimed the Doctor, "this is a preposterous expedient for removing his infirmity, such a disposition should be cultivated in the shade. Placing him at a public school is forcing an owl upon day"]

It is not from his form, in which we trace
 Strength join'd with beauty, dignity with grace,
 That man, the master of this globe, derives
 His right of empire over all that lives
 That form indeed, th' associate of a mind
 Vast in its powers, ethereal in its kind,
 That form, the labour of Almighty skill,
 Framed for the service of a free-born will,
 Asserts preëdence, and bespeaks control,
 But borrows all its grandeur from the soul
 Hers is the state, the splendour, and the throne,
 An intellectual kingdom, all her own
 For her the mem'ry fills her ample page
 With truths pour'd down from ev'ry distant age,
 For her amasses an unbounded store,
 The wisdom of great nations, now no more:

Though laden, not encumber'd with her spoil,
 Laborious, yet unconscious of her toil,
 When copiously supplied, then most enlarged,
 Still to be fed, and not to be surcharged.
 For her the fancy, roving unconfined,
 The present muse of ev'ry pensive mind,
 Works magic wonders, adds a brighter hue
 To nature's scenes, than nature ever knew
 At her command winds rise and waters roar,
 Again she lays them slumb'ring on the shore,
 With flow'r and fruit the wilderness supplies,
 Or bids the rocks in ruder pomp arise
 For her the judgment, umpire in the strife,
 That grace and nature have to wage through
 life,
 Quick-sighted arbiter of good and ill,
 Appointed sage preceptor to the will,
 Condemns, approves, and with a faithful voice
 Guides the decision of a doubtful choice

Why did the fiat of a God give birth
 To yon fair sun and his attendant earth?
 And, when descending he resigns the skies,
 Why takes the gentler moon her turn to rise,
 Whom ocean feels through all his countless waves,
 And owns her pow'r on ev'ry shore he leaves?
 Why do the seasons still enrich the year,
 Fruitful and young as in their first career?
 Spring hangs her infant blossoms on the trees,
 Rock'd in the cradle of the western breeze,
 Summer in haste the thriving charge receives
 Beneath the shade of her expanded leaves,
 Till autumn's fiercer heats and plenteous dews
 Dye them at last in all their glowing hues —
 'Twere wild profusion all, and bootless waste,
 Pow'r misemploy'd, munificence misplaced,
 Had not its Author dignified the plan,
 And crown'd it with the majesty of man
 Thus form'd, thus plac'd, intelligent, and taught,
 Look where he will, the wonders God has wrought,
 The wildest scorner of his Maker's laws
 Finds in a sober moment time to pause,
 To press th' important question on his heart,
 "Why form'd at all, and wherefore as thou art?"
 If man be what he seems,—thus hour a slave,
 The next mere dust and ashes in the grave,

The man, approving what had charm'd the boy,
 Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy;
 And not with curses on his art who stole
 The gem of truth from his unguarded soul
 The stamp of artless piety impress'd
 By kind tuition on his yielding breast,
 The youth now bearded, and yet pert and raw,
 Regards with scorn, though once received with
 awe,

And warp'd into the labyrinth of lies,
 'That babblers, call'd philosophers, devise,
 Blasphemes his creed as founded on a plan
 Replete with dreams, unworthy of a man
 Touch but his nature in its ailing part,
 Assert the native evil of his heart,
 His pride resents the charge, although the proof¹
 Rise in his forehead, and seem rank enough,
 Point to the cure, describe a Saviour's cross
 As God's expedient to retrieve his loss,
 The young apostate sickens at the view,
 And hates it with the malice of a Jew

How weak the barrier of mere nature proves
 Opposed against the pleasures nature loves!
 While self-betray'd, and wilfully undone,
 She longs to yield no sooner woo'd than won.
 Try now the merits of this blest exchange
 Of modest truth for wit's eccentric range
 Time was, he closed as he began the day,
 With decent duty, not ashamed to pray,
 The practice was a bond upon his heart,
 A pledge he gave for a consistent part,
 Nor could he dare presumptuously displease
 A pow'r confess'd so lately on his knees
 But now, farewell all legendary tales,
 The shadows fly, philosophy prevails!
 Prayer to the winds and caution to the waves,
 Religion makes the free by nature slaves!
 Priests have invented, and the world admired
 What knavish priests promulgate as inspired,
 Till reason, now no longer overawed,
 Resumes her pow'rs, and spurns the clumsy fraud;
 And, common sense diffusing real day,
 The meteor of the gospel dies away

¹ See 2 Chron xxi 19 —C.

Such rhapsodies our shrewd discerning youth
 Learn from expert inquirers after truth,
 Whose only care, might truth presume to speak,
 Is not to find what they profess to seek
 And thus, well-tutor'd only while we share
 A mother's lectures and a nurse's care,
 And taught at schools much mythologic stuff,¹
 But sound religion sparingly enough,
 Our early notices of truth disgraced
 Soon lose their credit, and are all effaced

Would you your son should be a sot or dunce,
 Lascivious, headstrong, or all these at once,
 That, in good time, the stripling's finish'd taste
 For loose expense and fashionable waste,
 Should prove your ruin and his own at last,—
 Train him in public with a mob of boys,
 Childish in mischief only and in noise,
 Else of a mannish growth, and five in ten
 In infidelity and lewdness, men
 There shall he learn, ere sixteen winters old,
 That authors are most useful, pawn'd or sold,
 That pedantry is all that schools impart,
 But taverns teach the knowledge of the heart,
 There waiter Dick with Bacchanalian lays
 Shall win his heart, and have his drunken praise,
 His counsellor and bosom friend shall prove,
 And some street-pacing harlot his first love
 Schools, unless discipline were doubly strong,
 Detain their adolescent charge too long,
 The management of tyros of eighteen
 Is difficult, their punishment obscene
 The stout tall Captain, whose superior size
 The minor heroes view with envious eyes,
 Becomes their pattern, upon whom they fix
 Their whole attention, and ape all his tricks.
 His pride, that scorns t' obey or to submit,
 With them is courage, his effront'ry wit,
 His wild excursions, window-breaking feats,
 Robb'ry of gardens, quarrels in the streets,
 His hair-breadth 'scapes, and all his daring schemes,
 Transport them, and are made their fav'rite themes

¹ The author begs leave to explain, sensible that without such knowledge, neither the ancient poets nor historians can be tasted, or indeed understood, he does not mean to censure the pains that are taken to instruct a schoolboy in the religion of the heathen, but merely that neglect of Christian culture which leaves him shamefully ignorant of his own —O,

And evils, not to be endured, endure,
 Lest pow'r exerted, but without success,
 Should make the little ye retain still less
 Ye once were justly famed for bringing forth
 Undoubted scholarship and genuine worth,
 And in the firmament of fame still shines
 A glory, bright as that of all the signs,
 Of poets raised by you, and statesmen, and divines
 Peace to them all, those brilliant times are fled,
 And no such lights are kindling in their stead.
 Our striplings shine indeed, but with such rays
 As set the midnight not in a blaze,
 And seem, if judged by their expressive looks,
 Deeper in none than in their surgeon's books

Say, muse, (for, education made the song,
 No muse can hesitate or linger long)
 What causes move us, knowing as we must
 That these *Menageries* all fail their trust,
 To send our sons to scot and scamper there,
 While colts and puppies cost us so much care?

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
 We love the play-place of our early days,
 The scene is touching, and the heart is stone
 That feels not at that sight, and feels at none
 The wall on which we tried our graving skill,
 The very name we carved subsisting still,
 The bench, on which we sat while deep employ'd
 Though mangled, hack'd, and heav'd, not yet destroy'd;
 The little ones unbutton'd, glowing hot,
 Playing our games, and on the very spot,
 As happy as we once, to kneel and draw
 The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw;
 To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
 Or drive it devious with a dext'rous pat.—
 The pleasing spectacle at once excites
 Such recollection of our own delights,
 That, viewing it, we seem almost to obtain
 Our innocent sweet simple years again
 This fond attachment to the well-known place
 Whence first we started into life's long race,
 Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,
 We feel it ev'n in age, and at our latest day¹

¹ Johnson only three years before his death, supplied an illustration of Cowper's line "The story is told by Reid—"A gentleman of Lichfield

Hark! how the sire of chits, whose future share
 Of classic food begins to be his care,
 With his own knees placed on either knee,
 Indulges all a father's heartfelt glee,
 And tells them as he strokes their silver locks,
 That they must soon learn Latin, and to box,
 Then, turning, he regales his listening wife
 With all the adventures of his early life,
 His skill in coachmanship, or driving chaise,
 In bilking tavern bills and spouting plays;
 What shifts he used, detected in a scrape,
 How he was flogg'd, or had the luck to escape,
 What sums he lost at play, and how he sold
 Watch, seals and all,—till all his pranks are told
 Retracing thus his *prolifer* (in a name
 That palliates deeds of folly and of shame)
 He gives the local bias all its sway,
 Re-olves that where he play'd his sons shall play,
 And destines their bright genius to be shown
 Just in the scene, where he display'd his own
 The meek and bashful boy will soon be taught
 To be as bold and forward as he ought,
 The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,
 Great schools suit best the sturdy and the rough
 Ah, happy designation prudent choice,
 The event is sure, expect it, and rejoice!
 Soon see your wish fulfill'd in either child,
 The pert made perter, and the tame made wild

The great indeed, by titles, riches, birth,
 Excused th' incurance of more solid worth
 Are best disposed of where with most success
 They may acquire that confident address,
 Those habits of profuse and lewd expense,
 That scorn of all delights but those of sense,
 Which though in plain plebeians we condemn,
 With so much reason all expect from them
 But families of less illustrious fame,
 Whose chief distinction is their spotless name,

meeting the Doctor returning from a walk inquired how far he had been? The Doctor replied he had gone round Mr. Levett's field (the place where the scholars play) in search of a rail that he used to jump over when a boy—and says the Doctor—in a transport of joy, I have been so fortunate as to find it. I stood said he, gazing upon it some time with a degree of rapture nor it brought to my mind all my juvenile sports and pastimes, and at length I determined to try myself and dexterity. I laid aside my hat and wig, pulled off my coat and leapt over it twice. Johnson was then about seventy two years old.

Whose heirs, their honours none, their income small,
 Must shine by true desert, or not at all,
 What dream they of, that with so little care
 They risk their hopes, their dearest treasure there?
 They dream of little Charles or William graced
 With wig prolix, down-flowing to his waist,
 They see th' attentive crowds his talents draw,
 They hear him speak—the oracle of law
 The father, who designs his babe a priest,
 Dreams him episcopally such at least,
 And while the playful jockey secures the room
 Briskly, astride upon the parlour broom,
 In fancy sees him more superbly ride
 In coach with purple lined, and mitres on its side
 Events improbable and strange as these,
 Which only a parental eye foresees,
 A public school shall bring to pass with ease
 But how? resides such virtue in that air
 As must create an appetite for pray'r?
 And will it breathe into him all the zeal
 That candidates for such a prize should feel,
 To take the lead and be the foremost still
 In all true worth and literary skill?
 "Ah, blind to bright futurity, untaught
 The knowledge of the world, and dull of thought.
 Church-ladders are not always mounted best
 By learned clerks and Latinists profess'd
 Th' exalted prize demands an upward look,
 Not to be found by poring on a book
 Small skill in Latin, and still less in Greek,
 Is more than adequate to all I seek
 Let erudition grace him, or not grace,
 I give the bauble but the second place,
 His wealth, fame, honours, all that I intend,
 Subsist and centre in one point—a friend
 A friend, whate'er he studies or neglects,
 Shall give him consequence, heal all defects
 His intercourse with peers, and sons of peers—
 There dawns the splendour of his future years,
 In that bright quarter his propitious skies
 Shall blush betimes, and there his glory rise
 Your Lordship and your Grace, what school can
 teach
 A rhet'ric equal to those parts of speech?
 What need of Homer's verse, or Tully's prose,
 Sweet interjections! if he learn but those?

Let rev'rend churls his ignorance rebuke,
 Who starve upon a dog's ear'd Pentateuch,
 The parson knows enough who knows a duke —
 Egregious purpose! worthily begun
 In barb'rous prostitution of your son,
 Press'd on *his* part by means that would disgrace
 A scriv'ner's clerk, or footman out of place,
 And ending, if at last its end be gain'd,
 In sacrilege, in God's own house profaned
 It may succeed, and, if his sins should call
 For more than common punishment, it shall
 The wretch shall rise, and be the thing on earth
 Least qualified in honour, learning, worth,
 To occupy a sacred, awful post,
 In which the best and worthiest tremble most
 The *royal letters* are a thing of course,
 A king, that would, might recommend his horse,
 And Deans, no doubt, and Chapters, with one voice,
 As bound in duty, would confirm the choice
 Behold your Bishop! well he plays his part,
 Christian in name, and Infidel in heart,
 Ghostly in office, earthly in his plan,
 A slave at court, elsewhere a lady's man!
 Dumb as a senator, and as a priest
 A piece of mere church furniture at best,
 To live estranged from God his total scope,
 And his end sure, without one glimpse of hope. —
 But, fair although and feasible it seem,
 Depend not much upon your golden dream,
 For Providence, that seems concern'd t' exempt
 The hallow'd bench from absolute contempt,
 In spite of all the wrigglers into place,
 Still keeps a seat or two for worth and grace,
 And therefore 'tis, that, though the sight be rare,
 We sometimes see a Lowth,¹ or Bagot, there
 Besides, school-friendships are not always found,
 Though fair in promise, permanent and sound,

¹ The learned Bishop of London, whose early verses excited the warm admiration of Cowper. In a letter to Unwin, he gives his reasons for recommending Bagot. In the first place, to show that he had no objection to a Bishop, *quia* Bishop. In the second place, because 'the brothers were all five his schoolfellows, and very amiable and valuable boys, and thirdly, because the Bishop had been rudely assailed for a sermon which seemed to Cowper to be admirable. To Walter Bagot he wrote (January 15, 1786), — 'When I can hear of the rest of the Bishops, that they preach and live as your brother does, I will think more respectfully of them than I feel inclined to do at present.

The most disint'rested and virtuous minds,
In early years connected, time unbinds,
New situations give a different cast
Of habit, inclination, temper, taste,
And he that seem'd our counterpart at first,
Soon shows the strong similitude reversed
Young heads are giddy, and young hearts are war
And make mistakes for manhood to reform
Boys are at heat but pretty buds unblown,
Whose scent and hues are rather guess'd than
known,

Each dreams that each is just what he appears,
But learns his error in maturer years,
When disposition, like a sail unfurl'd,
Shows all its rents and patches to the world
If, therefore, ev'n when honest in design,
A boyish friendship may so soon decline,
'Twere wiser sure t' inspire a little heart
With just abhorrence of so mean a part,
Than set your son to work at a vile trade,
For wages so unlikely to be paid.

Our public hives of puerile resort,
That are of chief and most approved report,
To such base hopes in many a sordid soul
Owe their repute in part, but not the whole
A principle, whose proud pretensions pass
Unquestion'd, though the jewel be but glass,
That with a world not often over-nice
Ranks as a virtue, and is yet a vice,
Or rather a gross compound, justly tried,
Of envy, hatred, jealousy, and pride,
Contributes most perhaps t' enhance their fame,
And Emulation is its specious name
Boys, once on fire with that contentious zeal,
Feel all the rage that female rivals feel,
The prize of beauty, in a woman's eyes,
Not brighter than in theirs the scholar's prize
The spirit of that competition burns
With all varieties of ill by turns;
Each vainly magnifies his own success,
Resents his fellowe, wishes it were less,
Exults in his misfortune if he fail,
Deems his reward too great if he prevail,
And labours to surpass him day and night,
Less for improvement, than to tickle spite

The spur is pow'ful, and I grant its force,
 It pricks the genius forward in its course,
 Allows short time for play, and none for sloth,
 And, felt alike by each, advances both
 But judge, where so much evil intervenes,
 The end, though plausible, not worth the means.
 Weigh, for a moment, classical desert
 Against a heart depraved and temper hurt,
 Hurt, too, perhaps for life, for early wrong,
 Done to the nobler part, affects it long,
 And you are staunch indeed in learning's cause,
 If you can crown a discipline, that draws
 Such mischiefs after it, with much applause

Connexion, form'd for int'rest, and endear'd
 By selfish views, thus censured and cashier'd,
 And emulation, as engendring hate,
 Doom'd to a no less ignominious fate,
 The props of such proud seminaries fall,
 The JACHIN and the BOAZ of them all¹
 Great schools rejected then, as those that swell
 Beyond a size that can be managed well,
 Shall royal institutions miss the bays,
 And small academies win all the praise?
 Force not my drift beyond its just intent,
 I praise a school, as Pope a government,
 So take my judgment in his language dress'd,
 "Whate'er is best administer'd, is best"
 Few boys are born with talents that excel,
 But all are capable of living well
 Then ask not, whether limited or large,
 But, watch they strictly, or neglect their charge?
 If anxious only that their boys may *learn*
 While *Morals* languish, a despised concern,
 The great and small deserve one common blame,
 Different in size, but in effect the same
 Much zeal in virtue's cause all teachers boast,
 Though motives of mere lucre sway the most,
 Therefore, in towns and cities they abound,
 For there the game they seek is easiest found,
 Though there, in spite of all that care can do,
 Traps to catch youth are most abundant too

¹ The allusion is to Solomon's House, 1 Kings vii 21: "And he set up the pillars in the porch of the Temple, and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin, and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz."

If shrewd, and of a well constructed brain,
 Keen in pursuit, and vig'rous to retain,
 Your son come forth a prodigy of skill,
 As wheresoever taught, so form'd, he will,
 The pedagogue, with self-complacent air,
 Claims more than half the praise as his due share;
 But if with all his genius he betray,
 Not more intelligent, than loose and gay,
 Such vicious habits as disgrace his name,
 Threaten his health, his fortune, and his fame,
 Though want of due restraint alone have bred
 The symptoms that you see with so much dread,
 Unenvied there, he may sustain alone
 The whole reproach, the fault was all his own

Oh 'tis a sight to be with joy perused
 By all whom sentiment has not abused,
 New-fangled sentiment, the boasted grace
 Of those who never feel in the right place,
 A sight surpassed by none that we can show,
 Though Vestris on one leg still shine below,
 A father blest with an ingenuous son,—
 Father and friend and tutor all in one
 How!—turn again to tales long since forgot,
 Æsop and Phædrus and the rest?—Why not?
 He will not blush, that has a father's heart,
 To take in childish plays a childish part,
 But bonds his sturdy back to any toy
 That youth takes pleasure in, to please his boy,
 Then why resign into a stranger's hand
 A task as much within your own command,
 That God and nature and your int'rest too
 Seem with one voice to delegate to you?
 Why hire a lodging in a house unknown,
 For one whose tend'rest thoughts all hover round
 your own?

This second weaning, needless as it is,
 How does it lacerate both your heart and his'
 Th' indented stick, that loses day by day
 Notch after notch, till all are smooth'd away,
 Bears witness long ere his dismissal come,
 With what intense desire he wants his home.
 But though the joys he hopes beneath your roof
 Bid fair enough to answer in the proof,
 Harmless and safe and nat'ral as they are,
 A disappointment waits him even there

Arrived, he feels an unexpected change ;
 He blushes, hangs his head, is shy and strange,
 No longer takes, as once, with fearless ease,
 His favourite stand between his father's knees,
 But seeks the corner of some distant seat,
 And eyes the door, and watches a retreat,
 And, least familiar where he should be most,
 Feels all his happiest privileges lost
 Alas, poor boy !—the natural effect
 Of love by absence chill'd into respect
 Say, what accomplishments, at school acquired
 Brings he to sweeten fruits so undesired ?
 Thou well deserv'st an alienated son,
 Unless thy conscious heart acknowledge—none,
 None that, in thy domestic snug recess,
 He had not made his own with more address,
 Though some, perhaps, that shock thy feeling
 mind,
 And better never learn'd, or left behind
 Add too, that thus estranged thou canst obtain
 By no kind arts his confidence again,
 That here begins with most that long complaint
 Of filial frankness lost, and love grown faint,
 Which, oft neglected in life's waning years,
 A parent pours into regardless ears

Like caterpillars dangling under trees
 By slender threads, and swinging in the breeze,
 Which filthily bewray and sore disgrace
 The boughs in which are bred th' unseemly race,
 While ev'ry worm industriously weaves
 And winds his web about the rivell'd leaves ;
 So num'rous are the follies that annoy
 The mind and heart of ev'ry sprightly boy,
 Imaginations noxious and perverse,
 Which admonition can alone disperse
 Th' encroaching nuisance asks a faithful hand.
 Patient, affectionate, of high command,
 To check the procreation of a breed,
 Sure to exhaust the plant on which they feed
 'Tis not enough that Greek, or Roman page,
 At stated hours his freakish thoughts engage ;
 Ev'n in his pastimes he requires a friend
 To warn, and teach him safely to unbend,
 O'er all his pleasures gently to preside,
 Watch his emotions and control their tide ;

And loy'ing thus, and with an easy sway,
 A tax of profit from his very play,
 T' impress a value not to be erased
 On moments squander'd else, and running all to waste

And seems it nothing in a father's eye,
 That unimproved those many moments fly^p
 And is he well content, his son should find
 No nourishment to feed his growing mind
 But conjugated verbs, and nouns declined?
 For such is all the mental food purvey'd
 By publick hackneys in the schooling trade;
 Who feed a pupil's intellect with store
 Of syntax, truly, but with little more,
 Dismiss their cares when they dismiss their flock—
 Machines themselves, and govern'd by a clock
 Perhaps a father, blest with any brains,
 Would deem it no abuse, or waste of pains,
 T' improve this diet, at no great expense,
 With sar'ry truth and wholesome common sense,
 To lead his son for prospects of delight,
 To some not steep, though philosophic, height,
 Thence to exhibit to his wond'ring eyes
 Yon circling worlds, their distance, and their size,
 The moons of Jove, and Saturn's belted ball,
 And the harmonious order of them all,
 To show him in an insect, or a flower,
 Such microscope proofs of skill and power,
 As, hid from ages past, God now displays,
 To combat Atheists with in modern days,
 To spread the earth before him, and commend,
 With designation of the finger's end,
 Its various parts to his attentive note,
 Thus bringing home to him the most remote;
 To teach his heart to glow with gen'rous flame,
 Caught from the deeds of men of ancient fame,
 And, more than all, with commendation due,
 To set some living worthy in his view,
 Whose fair example may at once inspire
 A wish to copy what he must admire
 Such knowledge gain'd betimes, and which appears,
 Though solid, not too weighty for his years,
 Sweet in itself, and not forbidding sport,
 When health demands it, of athletic sort,
 Would make him what some lovely boys have been,
 And more than one perhaps that I have seen,

An evidence and reprehension both
Of the mere school boy's lean and tardy growth

Art thou a man professionally tied,
With all thy faculties elsewhere applied,
Too busy to intend a meaner care
Than how t' enrich thyself, and next, thine heir;
Or art thou (as, though rich, perhaps thou art)
But poor in knowledge, having none t' impart—
Behold that figure, neat, though plainly clad,
His sprightly mingled with a shade of sad,
Not of a nimble tongue, though now and then
Heard to articulate like other men,
No jester, and yet lively in discourse,
His phrase well chosen, clear, and full of force,
And his address, if not quite French in ease,
Not English stiff, but frank, and form'd to
please,

Low in the world, because he scorns its arts,
A man of letters, manners, morals, parts,
Unpatronized, and therefore little known,
Wise for himself and his few friends alone,—
In him, thy well appointed proxy see,
Arm'd for a work too difficult for thee,
Prepared by taste, by learning, and true worth,
To form thy son, to strike his genius forth,
Beneath thy roof, beneath thine eye to prove
The force of discipline when back'd by love,
To double all thy pleasure in thy child,
His mind inform'd, his morals undefiled
Safe under such a wing, the boy shall show
No spots contracted among grooms below,
Nor taint his speech with meannesses design'd
By footman Tom for witty and refined
There—in his commerce with the liv'ried herd
Lurks the contagion chiefly to be fear'd,
For since (so fashion dictates) all, who claim
A higher than a mere plebeian fame,
Find it expedient, come what mischief may,
To entertain a thief or two in pay,
(And they that can afford th' expence of more,
Some half a dozen, and some half a score)
Great cause occurs to save him from a band
So sure to spoil him, and so near at hand;
A point secured, if once he be supplied
With some such Mentor always at his side.

Are such men rare? perhaps they would abound
 Were occupation easier to be found,
 Were education, else so sure to fail,
 Conducted on a manageable scale,
 And schools, that have outlived all just esteem,
 Exchanged for the secure domestic scheme
 But having found him, be thou duke or earl,
 Show thou hast sense enough to prize the pearl,
 And as thou wouldst th' advancement of thine heir
 In all good faculties beneath his care,
 Respect, as is but rational and just,
 A man deem'd worthy of so dear a trust
 Despised by thee, what more can he expect
 From youthful folly, than the same neglect?
 A flat and fatal negative obtains
 That instant, upon all his future pains,
 His lessons tire, his mild rebukes offend,
 And all the instructions of thy son's best friend
 Are a stream choked, or trickling to no end
 Doom him not then to solitary meals,
 But recollect that he has sense, and feels,
 And that, possessor of a soul refined,
 An upright heart and cultivated mind,
 His post not mean, his talents not unknown,
 He deems it hard to vegetate alone
 And, if admitted at thy board he sit,
 Account him no just mark for idle wit,
 Offend not him, whom modesty restrains
 From repartee, with jokes that he disdains,
 Much less transfix his feelings with an oath,
 Nor frown, unless he vanish with the cloth—
 And, trust me, his utility may reach
 To more than he is hired, or bound, to teach,
 Much trash unutter'd and some ills undone,
 Through reverence of the censor of thy son

But if thy table be indeed unclean,
 Foul with excess, and with discourse obscene,
 And thou a wretch, whom, following her old plan,
 The world accounts an honourable man,
 Because, forsooth, thy courage has been tried,
 And stood the test, perhaps on the wrong side,
 Though thou hadst never grace enough to prove
 That any thing but vice could win thy love,
 Or hast thou a polite, card-playing wife,
 Cham'd to the routs that she frequents, for life,

Who, just when industry begins to snore,
 Flies, wing'd with joy, to some coach-crowded door,
 And thrice in ev'ry winter throngs thine own
 With half the chariots and sedans in town,
 Thyself meanwhile e'en shifting as thou mayst,
 Not very sober though, nor very chaste,
 Or is thine house, though less superb thy rank,
 If not a scene of pleasure, a mere blank,
 And thou at best, and in thy sob'rest mood,
 A trisler, vain, and empty of all good?
 Though mercy for thyself thou canst have none,
 Hear nature plead, show mercy to thy son
 Saved from his home, where ev'ry day brings forth
 Some mischief fatal to his future worth,
 Find him a better in a distant spot,
 Within some pious pastor's humble cot,
 Where vile example (yours I chiefly mean,
 The most seducing and the oft'nest seen)
 May never more be stamp'd upon his breast,
 Not yet perhaps incurably impress'd,
 Where early rest makes early rising sure,
 Disease or comes not, or finds easy cure,
 Prevented much by diet neat and plain,
 Or, if it enter, soon starv'd out again,
 Where all th' attention of his faithful host
 Discreetly limited to two at most,
 May raise such fruits as shall reward his care,
 And not at last evaporate in air,
 Where stillness aiding study, and his mind
 Serene, and to his duties much inclined,
 Not occupied in dry dreams, as at home,
 Of pleasures past, or follies yet to come,
 His virtuous toil may terminate at last
 In settled habit and decided taste
 But whom do I advise? the fashion-led,
 Th' incorrigibly wrong, the deaf, the dead,
 Whom care and cool deliberation suit,
 Not better much than spectacles a brute,
 Who, if their sons some slight tuition share,
 Deem it of no great moment whose, or where,
 Too proud t' adopt the thoughts of one unknown,
 And much too gay t' have any of their own
 But courage man! methought the muse replied,
 Mankind are various, and the world is wide,
 The ostrich, silliest of the feather'd kind,
 And form'd of God without a parent's mind,

Commits her eggs, incautious, to the dust,
 Forgetful that the foot may crush the trust;
 And, while on public nurs'ries they rely,
 Not knowing, and too oft not caring, why,
 Irrational in what they thus prefer,
 No few, that would seem wise, resemble her
 But all are not alike, thy warning voice
 May here and there prevent erroneous choice,
 And some perhaps, who, busy as they are,
 Yet make their progeny their dearest care,
 Whose hearts will ache, once told what ills may
 reach

Their offspring left upon so wild a beach,
 Will need no stress of argument t' enforce
 Th' expedience of a less advent'rous course
 The rest will slight thy counsel, or condemn,
 But *they* have human feelings,—turn to *them*

To you then, tenants of life's middle state,
 Securely placed between the small and great,
 Whose character, yet undebauch'd, retains
 Two thirds of all the virtue that remains,
 Who, wise yourselves, desire your sons should learn
 Your wisdom and your ways—to you I turn
 Look round you on a world perversely blind,
 See what contempt is fall'n on human kind,
 See wealth abused, and dignities misplaced,
 Great titles, offices, and trusts disgraced,
 Long lines of ancestry renown'd of old,
 Their noble qualities all quench'd and cold,
 See Bedlam's closeted and handcuff'd charge
 Surpass'd in frenzy by the mad at large,
 See great commanders making war a trade,
 Great lawyers, lawyers without study made,
 Churchmen, in whose esteem their blest employ
 Is odious, and their wages all their joy,
 Who far enough from furnishing their shelves
 With Gospel lore, turn infidels themselves,
 See womanhood despised, and manhood shamed
 With infamy too nauseous to be named,
 Fops at all corners lady-like in mien,
 Civeted fellows, smelt ere they are seen,
 Else coarse and rude in manners, and their tongue
 On fire with curses and with nonsense hung,
 Now flush'd with drunk'ness, now with whoredom pale,
 Their breath a sample of last night's regale.

See volunteers in all the vilest arts
 Men well endow'd, of honourable parts,
 Design'd by nature wise, but self-made fools ;—
 All these, and more like these, were bred at school,
 And if it chance, as sometimes chance it will,
 That though school bred, the boy be virtuous still,
 Such rare exceptions, shining in the dark,
 Prove rather than impeach the just remark :
 As here and there a twinkling star descri'd
 Serves but to show how black is all beside
 Now look on him whose very voice in tone,
 Just echoes thine, whose features are thine own,
 And stroke his polish'd cheek of purest red,
 And lay thine hand upon his flaxen head
 And say,—My boy, th' unwelcome hour is come,
 When thou transplanted from thy genial home,
 Must find a colder soil and bleaker air,
 And trust for safety to a stranger's care,
 What character, what turn thou wilt assume
 From constant converse with I know not whom,
 Who there will court thy friendship, with what views,
 And, artless as thou art, whom thou wilt choose,
 Though much depends on what thy choice shall be,
 Is all chance medley and unknown to me
 Canst thou, the tear just trembling on thy lids,
 And while the dreadful risk foreseen, forbids,—
 Free too, and under no constraining force,
 Unless the sway of custom warp thy course,—
 Lay such a stake upon the losing side,
 Merely to gratify so blind a guide ?
 Thou canst not ! Nature pulling at thine heart
 Condemns th' unfatherly, th' imprudent part
 Thou wouldst not, deaf to Nature's tenderest plea,
 Turn him adrift upon a rolling sea,
 Nor say, *Go thither*, conscious that there lay
 A brood of asps, or quicksands in his way,
 Then, only govern'd by the selfsame rule
 Of nat'ral pity, send him not to school
 No—guard him better—*is he not thine own,*
 Thyself in miniature, thy flesh, thy bone ?
 And hop'st thou not ('tis every father's hope)
 That since thy strength must with thy years elope,
 And thou wilt need some comfort to assuage
 Health's last farewell, a staff of thine old age,
 That then, in recompense of all thy cares,
 Thy child shall show respect to thy gray hairs,

Befriend thee, of all other friends bereft,
 And give thy life its only cordial left?
 Aware then how much danger intervenes,
 To compass that good end forecast the means
 His heart, now passive, yields to thy command,
 Secure it thine, its key is in thine hand
 If thou desert thy charge and throw it wide,
 Nor heed what guests there enter and abide,
 Complain not if attachments lewd and base
 Supplant thee in it, and usurp thy place
 But if thou guard its sacred chambers sure
 From vicious inmates and delights impure,
 Either his gratitude shall hold him fast,
 And keep him warm and filial to the last,
 Or, if he prove unkind, (as who can say
 But being man, and therefore frail, he may ?)
 One comfort yet shall cheer thine aged heart,
 Howe'er he slight thee, thou hast done thy part

Oh barb'rous ! wouldst thou with a Gothic hand
 Pull down the schools—what ! all the schools i' th'
 land ?

Or throw them up to liv'ry nags and grooms,
 Or turn them into shops and auction-rooms ?
 —A captious question, sir, and yours is one,
 Deserves an answer similar, or none
 Wouldst thou, possessor of a flock employ
 (Apprized that he is such) a careless boy,
 And feed him well, and give him handsome pay,
 Merely to sleep, and let them run astray ?
 Survey our schools and colleges, and see
 A sight not much unlike my simile
 From education as the leading cause,
 The public character its colour draws,
 Thence the prevailing manners take their cast,
 Extravagant or sober, loose or chaste
 And though I would not advertise them yet,
 Nor write on each—*This Building to be Let*,
 Unless the world were all prepared t' embrace
 A plan well worthy to supply their place,
 Yet backward as they are, and long have been,
 To cultivate and keep the MORALS clear
 (Forgive the crime) I wish them I confess,
 Or better managed, or encouraged less

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN;

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED
AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN

[THE history of "Gilpin" is told by Hayley — "It happened in those years when his accomplished friend, Lady Austen, made a part of his little evening circle, that she observed him sinking into increasing dejection, it was her custom, on these occasions, to try all the resources of her sprightly powers for his immediate relief. She told him the story of John Gilpin (which had been treasured in her memory from her childhood), to dissipate the gloom of the passing hour. Its effect on the fancy of Cowper had the air of enchantment. He informed her, the next morning, that convulsions of laughter, brought on by his recollection of her story, had kept him awake during the greater part of the night—that he had turned it into a ballad. So arose the pleasant poem of 'John Gilpin.' Mrs Unwin sent it to the *Public Advertiser*, it was recited by Henderson, the comedian and mimic, and became the fashion of the fireside and the Court. The knight of the stone bottles—as Cowper called him—has no rival except the knight of La Mancha. Mrs. Piozzi found more humour in this ballad than in all 'Gulliver's Travels.' And what humour it is!—how gay, sunshiny, and refreshing! and the mirth and the sunshine, too, are thoroughly English. Cowper talked of gracing Gilpin with a Greek and a Latin motto, he might as well have put a Cardinal's hat on Dr Primrose. One improvement, however, he proposed, but did not perfectly execute. 'Here and there,' he told Unwin, 'I can give him a touch that, I think, will mend him, the language, in some places, not being quite so quaint and old-fashioned as it should be.'"]

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train band Captain oke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's sponse said to her dear,
—Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen

To-morrow is our wedding-day,
 And we will then repair
 Unto the Bell at Edmonton,
 All in a chaise and pair

My sister and my sister's child,
 Myself and children three,
 Will fill the chaise, so you must ride
 On horseback after we

He soon replied,—I do admire
 Of womankind but one,
 And you are she, my dearest dear,
 Therefore it shall be done

I am a linen-draper bold,
 As all the world doth know,
 And my good friend the Calender
 Will lend his horse to go

Quoth Mrs Gilpin,—That's well said;
 And for that wine is dear,
 We will be furnish'd with our own,
 Which is both bright and clear

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife;
 O'erjoy'd was he to find
 That, though on pleasure she was bent,
 She had a frugal mind

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
 But yet was not allow'd
 To drive up to the door, lest all
 Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
 Where they did all get in,
 Six precious souls, and all agog
 To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
 Were never folk so glad,
 The stones did rattle underneath
 As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gulpin at his horse's side
 Seized fast the flowing mane,
 And up he got in haste to ride,
 But soon came down again.

For saddle tree scarce reach'd had he,
 His journey to begin,
 When, turning round his head, he saw
 Three customers come in

So down he came, for loss of time,
 Although it grieved him sore,
 Yet loz of pance, full well he knew,
 Would trouble him much more

'Twas long before the customers
 Were suited to their mind,
 When Betty screaming came down stairs
 "The wine is left behind"

God lack! quoth he, yet bring it me,
 My leathern belt likewise,
 In which I bear my trusty sword
 When I do exercise

Now Mistress Gulpin careful soul,
 Had t'wo stone bottles found,
 To hold the liquor that she loved,
 And keep it safe and sound

Each bottle had a circling ear,
 Through which the belt he drew,
 And hung a bottle on each side,
 To make his balance true

Then over all, that he might be
 Lammpp'd from top to toe,
 His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
 He manfully did throw

Now see him mounted once again
 Upon his nimble steed
 Full slowly pacing o'er the stones
 With caution and good heed

But, finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat

So, 'Fair and softly,' John he cried
But John he cried in vain,
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought,
Away went hat and wig !
He little dreamt when he set out
Of running such a rig !

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung,
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all,
And ev'ry soul cried out, Well done !
As loud as he could bawl

Away went Gilpin—who but he ?
His fame soon spread around—
He carries weight, he rides a race !
'Tis a for thousand pound !

And still as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike-men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced,
For all might see the bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waist

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
And till he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay

And there he threw the wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wond'ring much
To see how he did ride

Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house—
They all at once did cry,
The dinner waits and we are tired.—
Said Gilpin—So am I.

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclined to tarry there,
For why? his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
 Shot by an archer strong,
 So did he fly—which brings me to
 The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
 And sore against his will,
 Till at his friend the Calender's
 His horse at last stood still.

The Calender, amazed to see
 His neighbour in such trim,
 Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
 And thus accosted him —

What news? what news? your tidings tell,
 Tell me you must and shall—
 Say why bare-headed you are come,
 Or why you come at all?

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
 And loved a timely joke,
 And thus unto the Calender
 In merry guise he spoke —

I came because your horse would come,
 And if I well forebode,
 My hat and wig will soon be here,
 They are upon the road

The Calender, right glad to find
 His friend in merry pin,
 Return'd him not a single word,
 But to the house went in

Whence straight he came with hat and wig,
 A wig that flow'd behind,
 A hat not much the worse for wear,
 Each comely in its kind

He held them up, and in his turn
 Thus show'd his ready wit —
 My head is twice as big as yours,
 They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face,
And stop and cut, for well you may
Be in a hungry case.

Said John—It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware

So, turning to his horse, he said—
I am in haste to dine,
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine

Ah luckless speech and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear,
For, while he spoke, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear

Whereat his horse did snort as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And pulloped off with all his might,
As he had done before

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig!
He lost them sooner than at first,
For why?—they were too big!

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pulled out half a crown;

And thus unto the youth she said
That drove them to the Bell,—
This shall be yours when you bring back
My husband safe and well.

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back again,
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein,

But not performing what he meant
 And gladly would have done,
 The frightened steed he frightened more,
 And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
 Went post-boy at his heels (—
 The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
 The lumb'ring of the wheels

Six gentlemen upon the road,
 Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
 With post-boy scamp'ring in the rear,
 They raised the hue and cry —

Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!
 Not one of them was mute,
 And all and each that pass'd that way
 Did join in the pursuit

And now the turnpike gates again
 Flew open in short space,
 The toll-men thinking, as before,
 'That Gilpin rode a race

And so he did, and won it too,
 For he got first to town,
 Nor stopp'd til where he had got up
 He did again get down.

Now let us sing, Long live the king,
 And Gilpin long live he,
 And when he next doth ride abroad,
 May I be there to see!¹

¹ "It was long since, and even in the infancy of 'John Gilpin, recommended to me by a lady now at Bristol, to write a sequel. But having always observed that authors, elated with the success of a first part, have fallen below themselves when they attempted a second. I had more prudence than to take her counsel." (May 8 1784.)

TO THE REV MR. NEWTON,
ON HIS RETURN FROM RAMSGATE

THAT ocean you have late survey'd,
Those rocks I too have seen;
But I, afflicted and dismay'd,
You tranquil and serene.

You from the flood-controlling steep
Saw stretch'd before your view,
With conscious joy, the threat'ning deep,
No longer such to you.

To me the waves, that ceaseless broke
Upon the dang'rous coast,
Hoarsely and ominously spoke
Of all my treasure lost

Your sea of troubles you have past,
And found the peaceful shore,
I, tempest-toss'd and wreck'd at last,
Come home to port no more

LOVE ABUSED

WHAT is there in the vale of life
Half so delightful as a wife,
When friendship, love, and peace combine
To stamp the marriage-bond divine?
The stream of pure and genuine love
Derives its current from above,
And earth a second Eden shows,
Where'er the healing water flows:
But ah, if from the dikes and drains
Of sensual nature's fev'rish veins,
Lust, like a lawless headstrong flood,
Impregnated with ooze and mud,
Descending fast on every side
Once mingles with the sacred tide,

Farewell the soul-enliv'ning scene!
 The banks that wore a smiling green,
 With rank defilement overspread,
 Bewail their flow'ry beauties dead
 The stream polluted, dark, and dull,
 Diffused into a Stygian pool,
 Through life's last melancholy years
 Is fed with ever-flowing tears
 Complaints supply the zephyr's part,
 And sighs that heave a breaking heart

A POETICAL EPISTLE TO LADY AUSTEN.

DEAR ANNA,—between friend and friend,
 Prose answers every common end,
 Serves, in a plain and homely way,
 T' express th' occurrence of the day,
 Our health, the weather, and the news,
 What walks we take, what books we choose,
 And all the floating thoughts we find
 Upon the surface of the mind.

But when a poet takes the pen,
 Far more alive than other men,
 He feels a gentle tingling come
 Down to his finger and his thumb,
 Derived from nature's noblest part,
 The centre of a glowing heart
 And this is what the world, who knows
 No flights above the pitch of prose,
 His more sublime vagaries slighting,
 Denominates an itch for writing
 No wonder I, who scribble rhyme
 To catch the triflers of the time,
 And tell them truths divine and clear,
 Which, couch'd in prose, they will not hear, <
 Who labour hard t' allure and draw
 The loiterers I never saw,
 Should feel that itching, and that tingling,
 With all my purpose intermingling,
 To your intrinsic merit true,
 When call'd t' address myself to you.

Mysterious are His ways, whose power
 Brings forth that unexpected hour,
 When minds, that never met before,
 Shall meet, unite, and part no more
 It is th' allotment of the skies,
 The hand of the Supremely Wise,
 That guides and governs our affections
 And plans and orders our connexions:
 Directs us in our distant road,
 And marks the bounds of our abode
 Thus we were settled when you found us,
 Peasants and children all around us,
 Not dreaming of so dear a friend,
 Deep in the abyss of Silver-End¹
 Thus Martha, ev'n against her will,
 Perch'd on the top of yonder hill,
 And you, tho' you must needs prefer
 The fairer scenes of sweet Sancerre,²
 Are come from distant Loire to choose
 A cottage on the banks of Ouse
 Thus page of Providence quite new,
 And now just op'ning to our view,
 Employs our present thoughts and pains
 To guess, and spell, what it contains
 But day by day, and year by year,
 Will make the dark enigma clear,
 And furnish us, perhaps, at last,
 Like other scenes already past,
 With proof that we, and our affairs,
 Are part of a Jehovah's cares
 For God unfolds, by slow degrees,
 The purport of his deep decrees,
 Sheds every hour a clearer light
 In aid of our defective sight,
 And spreads, at length, before the soul,
 A beautiful and perfect whole,
 Which busy man's inventive brain
 Tolls to anticipate, in vain.

Say, Anna, had you never known
 The beauties of a rose full blown,

¹ An obscure part of Olney, adjoining to the residence of Cowper, which faced the market place

² Lady Austen's residence in France.

Could you, tho' luminous your eye,
 By looking on the bad decay,
 Or guess, with a prophetic power,
 The future splendour of the glorious
 Just so, th' Omnipotent, who turns
 The system of a world's concerns,
 From mere minutiae can induce
 Events of most important use
 And bid a drawing sky display
 The blaze of a meridian day
 The world's of man's end, one and all
 As needs they must, from great to small;
 And vanity absorbs at length
 The monuments of human strength
 But who can tell how vast the plan
 Which this day's work at hand began
 Too small, perhaps, the slight occasion
 For our dim-sighted observation,
 It pass'd unnoticed, as the bird
 That cleaves the yielding air unnoted,
 And yet may prove, when need shall be,
 A harbinger of endless good

Not that I deem, or mean to call
 Friendship a blessing cheap or small
 But merely to remark that ours,
 Like some of nature's sweetest flowers,
 Rose from a seed of tiny size
 That seem'd to promise no such prize,
 A transient visit interposed,
 And made almost without a need
 (Hardly the effect of inclination)
 Much less of philosophy or reason
 Produced a friendship, then begun,
 That has cemented us in one,
 And plac'd it in our power to prove,
 By long fidelity and love,
 That Solomon has not spoken
 "A threefold cord is not soon broken"

FROM A LETTER TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON.

SAYS the pipe to the snuffbox, I can't understand
 What the ladies and gentlemen see in your face,
 That you are in fashion all over the land,
 And I am so much fallen into disgrace.

Do but see what a pretty contemplative air
 I give to the company—pray do but note 'em—
 You would think that the wise men of Greece were all
 there,
 Or, at least would suppose them the wise men of
 Gotham.¹

My breath is as sweet as the breath of blown roses,
 While you are a nuisance where'er you appear,
 There is nothing but sniv'ling and blowing of noses,
 Such a noise as turns any man's stomach to hear

Then lifting his lid in a delicate way,
 And op'ning his mouth with a smile quite engaging,
 The box in reply was heard plainly to say,—
 What a silly dispute is this we are waging!

If you have a little of merit to claim,
 You may thank the sweet-smelling Virginian weed,
 And I, if I seem to deserve any blame,
 The before-mention'd drug in apology plead.

Thus neither the praise nor the blame is our own,
 No room for a sneer, much less a cachinnus,
 We are vehicles, not of tobacco alone,
 But of anything else they may choose to put in us.

¹ Ray remarks on the proverb, "As wise as the men of Gotham," "It passeth for the *Periphrasis* of a fool, and an hundred fopperies are feigned and fathered on the townfolk of Gotham, a village in Nottinghamshire. As for Gotham, it doth breed as wise people as any which causelessly laugh at their simplicity."

THE COLUBRIAD

Close by the threshold of a door nail'd fast
 Three kittens sat, each kitten look'd agl'ast.
 I, passing swift and inattentive by,
 At the three kittens cast a careless eye,
 Not much concern'd to know what they did there;
 Not deeming kittens worth a poot's care
 But presently a loud and furious hiss
 Caused me to stop, and to exclaim "What's this?"
 When lo! upon the threshold met my view,
 With head erect, and eyes of fiery hue,
 A viper, long as Count de Grasse's queue
 Forth from his head his forked tongue he throws,
 Darting it full against a kitten's nose,
 Who having never seen, in field or house,
 The like, sat still and silent as a mouse
 Only projecting, with attention due,
 Her whisker'd face, she ask'd him, "Who are you?"
 On to the hall went I, with pace not slow,
 But swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe
 With which well arm'd I hasten'd to the spot.
 To find the viper, but I found him not
 And, turning up the leaves and shrubs around,
 Found only that he was not to be found
 But still the kittens, sitting as before,
 Sat watching close the bottom of the door
 "I hope," said I, "the villain I would kill,
 Has slipp'd between the door and the door-sill,
 And if I make despatch, and follow hard,
 No doubt but I shall find him in the yard,"
 For long ere now it should have been rehearsed,
 'Twas in the garden that I found him first
 Ev'n there I found him, there the full-grown cat
 His head, with velvet paw, did gently pat
 As curious as the kittens erst had been
 To learn what this phenomenon might mean.
 Fill'd with heroic ardour at the sight,
 And fearing every moment he would bite,
 And rob our household of our only cat,
 That was of age to combat with a rat,
 With outstretch'd hoe I slow him at the door,
 And taught him NEVER TO COME THERE NO MORE.

ON FRIENDSHIP¹

Amicitia nisi inter bonos esse non potest — CICERO.

WHAT virtue can we name, or grace,
But men unqualified and base
Will boast it their possession?
Profusion apes the noble part
Of liberality of heart,
And dulness of discretion.

But, as the gem of richest cost
Is ever counterfeited most,
So, always, imitation
Employs the utmost skill she can
To counterfeit the faithful man,
The friend of long duration.

Some will pronounce me too severe—
But long experience speaks me clear,
Therefore, that censure scorning,
I will proceed to mark the shelves,
On which so many dash themselves,
And give the simple warning

Youth, unadmonish'd by a guide,
Will trust to any fair outside
An error soon corrected,
For who, but learns, with riper years,
That man, when smoothest he appears,
Is most to be suspected.

But here again a danger lies,
Lest, thus deluded by our eyes,
And taking trash for treasure,
We should, when undecieved, conclude
Friendship, imaginary good,
A mere Utopian pleasure

¹ Hayley regarded this composition as one of the most admirable of Cowper's minor poems, and containing "the essence of all that has been said on this interesting subject." The alterations subsequently made in it are very questionable, and the revised line—

"What virtue, or what mental grace,"

is evidently ungrammatical.

An acquisition, rather rare,
 Is yet no subject of despair,
 Nor should it seem distress
 If either on forbidden ground,
 Or, where it was not to be found,
 We sought it unsuccessful

No friendship will abide the test
 That stands on sordid interest
 And mean self-love erected,
 Nor such, as may awhile subsist
 'Tis a sensualist and sensualist,
 For vicious ends connected.

Who hopes a friend should have a heart,
 Himself, well furnish'd for the part,
 And ready on occasion
 To show the virtue that he seeks,
 For 'tis an union that bespeaks
 A just reciprocation

A fretful temper will divide
 The closest knot that may be tied,
 By ceaseless sharp corrosion
 A temper, passionate and fierce,
 May suddenly your joys disperse
 At one immense explosion

In vain the talkative unite
 With hope of permanent delight.
 The secret just committed
 They drop through mere desire to prate,
 Forgetting its important weight,
 And by themselves outwitted

How bright so'er the prospect seems,
 All thoughts of friendship are but dreams,
 If envy chance to creep in,
 An envious man, if you succeed,
 May prove a dang'rous foe indeed,
 But not a friend worth keeping

As envy pines at good possess'd,
 So jealousy looks forth distress'd,
 On good that seems approaching;
 And, if success his steps attend,
 Discerns a rival in a friend,
 And hates him for encroaching.

Hence authors of illustrious name
 (Unless belied by common fame)
 Are sadly prone to quarrel,
 To deem the wit a friend displays
 So much of loss to their own praise,
 And pluck each other's laurel

A man renown'd for repartee,
 Will seldom scruple to make free
 With friendship's finest feeling;
 Will thrust a dagger at your breast,
 And tell you 'twas a special jest,
 By way of balm for healing

Beware of tallers, keep your ear
 Close stopt against the tales they hear,
 Fruits of their own invention,
 The separation of chief friends
 Is what their kindness most intends,
 Their sport is your dissension.

Friendship that wantonly admits
 A joco serious play of wits,
 In brilliant altercation,
 Is union such as indicates,
 Like Hand in-Hand Insurance plates
 Danger of conflagration.

Some fickle creatures boast a soul
 True as the needle to the pole,
 Yet shifting, like the weather,
 The needle's constancy forego
 For any novelty, and show
 Its variations rather

Insensibility makes some
 Unseasonably deaf and dumb,
 When most you need their pity,
 'Tis waiting till the tears shall fall
 From Gog and Magog in Guildhall,
 Those playthings of the city

The great and small but rarely meet
 On terms of amity complete
 Th' attempt would scarce be madder,
 Should any from the bottom hope,
 At one huge stride, to reach the top
 Of an erected ladder

So artful not a patriot cannot mix
 Their heterogeneous politics
 Without an effervescence,
 Such as of salts with lemon juice,
 But which is rarely known to induce,
 Like that, a coalescence

Religion should extinguish strife,
 And make a calm of human life
 But even those, who differ
 Only on topics left at large,
 How fiercely will they meet and clarge!
 No combatants are stiffer

To prove, alas! my main intent,
 Needs no great cost of argument,
 No cutting and contriving,
 Seeking a real friend, we seem
 To adopt the chemist's golden dream
 With still less hope of thriving

Then judge, or ere you choose your man,
 As circumspectly as you can,
 And, having made election,
 See that no disrespect of yours,
 Such as a friend but ill endures,
 Enfeeble his affection

It is not timber, lead, and stone,
 An architect requires alone,
 To finish a great building,
 The palace were but half complete,
 Could he by any chance forget
 The carving and the gilding.

As similarity of mind,
 Or something not to be defined,
 First rivets our attention,
 So manners decent and polite,
 The same we practised at first sight,
 Must save it from declension.

The man who hails you Tom—or Jack,
 And proves by thumping on your back,
 His sense of your great merits,
 Is such a friend, that one had need
 Be very much his friend indeed,
 To pardon, or to bear it

Some friends make thus their prudent plan-
 " Say little, and hear all you can ;"
 Safe policy, but hateful ;
 So barren sands imbo the show'r,
 But render neither fruit nor flow'r,
 Unpleasant and ungrateful

They whisper trivial things, and small ;
 But, to communicate at all
 Things serious, deem improper ;
 Their feculence and froth they show,
 But keep the best contents below,
 Just like a summing copper

These samples (for alas ! at last
 'These are but samples, and a taste
 Of evils yet unmention'd)
 May prove the task, a task indeed,
 In which 'tis much, if we succeed,
 However well intention'd

Pursue the theme, and you shall find
 A disciplined and furnish'd mind
 To be at least expedient,
 And, after summing all the rest,
 Religion ruling in the breast
 A principal ingredient

True friendship has, in short, a grace
 More than terrestrial in its face,
 That proves it Heav'n-descended ;
 Man's love of woman not so pure,
 Nor, when sincerest, so secure
 To last till life is ended.

ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.

WRITTEN WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED, SEPTEMBER, 1782

To the March in Scipio

TOLL for the brave !
 The brave that are no more !
 All sunk beneath the wave,
 Fast by their native shore !

Eight hundred of the brave,
 Whose courage well was tried,
 Had made the vessel heel,
 And laid her on her side

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
 And she was overset,
 Down went the Royal George,
 With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave !
 Brave Kempenfelt is gone ;
 His last sea fight is fought,
 His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle ;
 No tempest gave the shock ;
 She sprang no fatal leak ,
 She ran upon no rock

His sword was in its sheath ;
 His fingers held the pen,¹
 When Kempenfelt went down,
 With twice four hundred men

Weigh the vessel up,
 Once dreaded by our foes !
 And mingle with our cup
 The tear that England owes.

¹ The admiral was writing in his cabin.

Her timbers yet are sound,
 And she may float again,
 Full charged with England's thunder,
 And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
 His victories are o'er;
 And he and his eight hundred,
 Shall plough the wave no more.

IN SUBMERSIONEM NAVIGII, CUI GEORGIUS
 REGALE NOMEN, INDITUM.

PLANGIMUS fortes Perière fortes,
 Patrium propter pericre litus
 Bis quater centum, subito sub alto
 Æquoro mersi.

Navis, innitens lateri, jacebat,
 Malus ad summas trepidabat undas,
 Cum levis, funes quatiens, ad imum
 Depulit aura

Plangimus fortes Nimis, heu, caducam
 Fortibus vitam voluere Parcere,
 Nec sinunt ultrà tibi nos recentes
 Nectere laurus

Magne, qui nomen, hæc incannorum,
 Traditum ex multis atavis tulisti!
 At tuos olim memorabit ævum
 Omne triumphos

Non hyems illos furibunda mersit,
 Non mari in clauso scopuli latentæ,
 Fissa non rimis abies, nec atrox
 Abstulit ensis

Navitæ sed tum nimum jocosæ
 Voce fallebant hilari laborem,
 Et quiescebat, calamoque dextram im-
 plevrat heros.

Vos, quibus cordi est grave opus primumque,
 Humidum ex alto spolum levate,
 Et putrescentes sub aquis amicos
 Reddite amicis!

Hi quidem (sic Dis placuit) fuêre:
 Sed ratio, nondùm putris, ire possit
 Rursus in bellum, Britonumquo nomen
 Tollere ad astra

ON PEACE.

WRITTEN IN THE SUMMER OF 1783, AT THE REQUEST OF
 LADY AUSTEN, WHO GAVE THE SENTIMENT

Air—"My fond shepherds of late," &c

No longer I follow a sound,
 No longer a dream I pursue,
 O happiness! not to be found,
 Unattainable treasure, adieu!

I have sought thee in splendour and dress,
 In the regions of pleasure and taste,
 I have sought thee, and seem'd to possess,
 But have proved thee a vision at last.

A humble ambition and hope
 Tho voice of true wisdom inspires,
 'Tis sufficient, if Peace be the scope,
 And the summit of all our desires

Peace may be the lot of the mind
 That seeks it in meekness and love.
 But rapture and bliss are confined
 To the glorified spirits above

LONG.

ALSO WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF LADY AUSTIN.

Air—"The Lass of Pattie's Mill."

WHEN all within is peace,
How nature seems to smile!
Delights that never cease,
The livelong day beguile

From morn to dewy eve,
With open hand she showers
Fresh blessings, to decene
And soothe the silent hours

It is content of heart
Gives nature power to please;
The mind that feels no smart,
Enlivens all it sees,

Can make a wintry sky
Seem bright as smiling May,
And evening's closing eye,
As peep of early day

The vast majestic globe,
So beauteously array'd
In nature's various robe
With wondrous skill display'd.

Is to a mourner's heart
A dreary wild at best,
It flutters to depart,
And longs to be at rest.

THE DISTRESSED TRAVELLERS,

OR, LABOUR IN VAIN.

A New Song to a Tune never sung before

I SING of a journey to Clifton,
 We would have perform'd if we could,
 Without cart or barrow to lift on
 Poor Mary and me through the mud.
 Slee sla slud,
 Stuck in the mud,

Oh it is pretty to wade through a flood!

So away we went, slipping and sliding,
 Hop, hop, *à la mode de deux* frogs,
 'Tis near as good walking as riding,
 When ladies are dress'd in their clogs
 Wheels, no doubt,
 Go briskly about,
 But they clatter and rattle, and make such a rout!

SHE

"Well! now I protest it is charming,
 How finely the weather improves!
 That cloud, though 'tis rather alarming,
 How slowly and stately it moves!"

HE

"Pshaw! never mind,
 'Tis not in the wind,
 We are travelling south, and shall leave it behind"

SHE

"I am glad we are come for an airing,
 For folks may be pounded and penn'd,
 Until they grow rusty, not caring
 To stir half a mile to an end"

HE

"The longer we stay,
 The longer we may,
 It's a folly to think about weather or way."

SHE

"But now I begin to be frightened,
 If I fall, what a way I should roll!
 I am glad that the bridge was indicted,—
 Stay ' stop! I am sunk in a hole!"

HE

"Nay, never care!
 'Tis a common affair
 You'll not be the last that will set a foot there."

SHE

"Let me breathe now a little, and ponder
 On what it were better to do,
 That terrible lane I see yonder,
 I think we shall never get through "

HE

"So think I —
 But by the by,
 We never shall know, if we never should try "

SHE

"But should we get there, how shall we get home!
 What a terrible deal of bad road we have past!
 Slipping and sliding and if we should come
 To a difficult stile, I am ruin'd at last!
 Oh this lane!
 Now it is plain
 That struggling and striving is labour in vain."

HE

"Stick fast there while I go and look—"

SHE

"Don't go away, for fear I should fall!"

HE

"I have examin'd it every nook,
 And what you see here is a sample of all.
 Come, wheel round,
 The dirt we have found
 Would be an estate at a farthing a pound."

Now, mster Anne, the guitar you must take,
 Set it, and sing it, and make it a song,
 I have varied the verse for variety's sake,
 And cut it off short—because it was long
 'Tis hobbling and lame,
 Which critics wont blame,
 For the sense and the sound, they say, should be the same

THE ROSE¹

The rose had been wash'd, just wash'd in a shower,
 Which Mary to Anna convey'd,
 The plentiful moisture encumber'd the flower,
 And weigh'd down its beautiful head

The cup was all fill'd, and the leaves were all wet,
 And it seem'd, to a fanciful view,
 To weep for the buds it had left with regret
 On the flourishing bush where it grew

'I hastily seized it, unfit as it was
 For a nosegay so dripping and drown'd,
 And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas!
 I snapped it, it fell to the ground

And such I exclaimed is the pitiless part
 Some act by the delicate mind,
 Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart,
 Already to sorrow resigned

This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,
 Might have bloom'd with its owner awhile,
 And the tear, that is wiped with a little address,
 May be follow'd perhaps by a smile

¹ "It appears to me that the lady who purloined your friend's song, 'The Rose,' had as little good taste as honesty. A quaint affectation of ideas, and archaïcal backwardness of expression disgrace it:

'The rose had been wash'd, just wash'd by a shower,
 Which Mary to Anna convey'd.'

"According to grammar construction, the word *which* belongs to the shower, and not to the rose. Mr. Cary, Savillo, and myself used to laugh at it, as a disagreeable quiz of a ballad, when we believed it a lady's composition. Since Cary has known it to be Cowper's he told me he had persuaded himself to write it. Such is prejudice!" — (Miss Seward to Hayley, March 7, 1803)

THE VALEDICTION.

FAREWELL, false hearts! whose best affections fail
 Like shallow brooks which summer suns exhale!
 Forgetful of the man whom once ye chose,
 Cold in his cause, and careless of his woes,
 I bid you both a long and last adieu!

Cold in my turn, and unconcern'd like you
 First farewell, Niger!¹ whom, now duly proved,
 I disregard as much as I have loved.

Your brain well furnish'd, and your tongue well taught
 To press with energy your ardent thought,
 Your senatorial dignity of face,
 Sound sense, intrepid spirit, manly grace,
 Have raised you high as talents can ascend,
 Made you a peer, but spoilt you for a friend!
 Pretend to all that parts have e'er acquired,
 Be great, be fear'd, be envied, be admired,
 To fame as lasting as the earth pretend,
 But not hereafter to the name of friend!
 I sent you verse, and, as your lordship knows,
 Back'd with a modest sheet of humble prose,
 Not to recall a promise to your mind,
 Fulfill'd with ease had you been so inclined,
 But to comply with feelings, and to give
 Proof of an old affection still alive
 Your sullen silence serves at least to tell
 Your alter'd heart, and so, my lord, farewell!

Next, busy actor on a meaner stage,²
 Amusement-monger of a trifling age,
 Illustrious lustrionic patentee,
 Terentius,³ once my friend, farewell to thee!
 In thee some virtuous qualities combine,
 To fit thee for a nobler part than thine,
 Who, born a gentleman, hast stoop'd too low,
 To live by buskin, sock, and raree-show
 Thy schoolfellow and partner of thy plays,
 When Nichols⁴ swung the birch and twined the bays
 And having known thee bearded and full grown
 The weekly censor of a laughing town,⁵

¹ Lord Thurlow

² Colman

³ Colman had translated Terence

⁴ The master of Westminster school

⁵ Colman was connected with a weekly publication, called *The Connoisseur*

I thought the volume I presumed to send,
Graced with the name of a long-absent friend,
Might prove a welcome gift, and touch thine heart,
Not hard by nature, in a feeling part
But thou, it seems (what cannot grandeur do,
Though but a dream!) art grown disdainful too,
And strutting in thy school of queens and kings,
Who fret their hour and are forgotten things,
Hast caught the cold distemper of the day,
And, like his lordship, cast thy friend away

Oh Friendship! Cordial of the human breast!
So little felt, so fervently profess'd!

Thy blossoms deck our unsuspecting years,
The promise of delicious fruit appears
We hug the hopes of constancy and truth,
Such is the folly of our dreaming youth,
But soon, alas! detect the rash mistake,
That sanguine inexperience loves to make,
And view with tears th' expected harvest lost,
Decay'd by time, or wither'd by a frost
Whoever undertakes a friend's great part
Should be renew'd in nature, pure in heart,
Prepared for martyrdom, and strong to prove
A thousand ways the force of genuine love
He may be call'd to give up health and gain
T' exchange content for trouble, ease for pain,
To echo sigh for sigh, and groan for groan,
And wet his cheeks with sorrows not his own
The heart of man, for such a task too frail,
When most relied on, is most sure to fail,
And, summon'd to partake its fellow's woe,
Starts from its office, like a broken bow

Vot'ries of business, and of pleasure, prove
Faithless alike in friendship, and in love
Retired from all the circles of the gay,
And all the crowds that bustle life away,
To scenes, where competition, envy, strife
Beget no thunder-clouds to trouble life,
Let me, the charge of some good angel, find
One, who has known, and has escaped mankind
Polite, yet virtuous, who has brought away
The manners, not the morals, of the day
With him, perhaps with *her*, (for men have known
No firmer friendships than the fair have shown)
Let me enjoy, in some unthought-of spot,
All former friends forgiven, and forgot,

Down to the close of life's fast fading scene,
 Union of hearts, without a flaw between
 'Tis grace, 'tis bounty, and it calls for praise,
 If God give health, that sunshine of our days!
 And if he add, a blessing shared by few,
 Content of heart, more praises still are due—
 But if he grant a friend, that boon possess'd
 Indeed is treasure, and crowns all the rest,
 And giving one, whose heart is in the skies,
 Born from above, and made divinely wise,
 He gives, what bankrupt nature never can,
 Whose noblest coin is light and brittle man,
 Gold, purer far than Ophir ever knew,
 A soul, an image of himself, and therefore true

IN BREVITATEM VITÆ SPATII HOMINIBUS CONCESSI

BY DR JOETIN

HEI mihi! Lege ratâ sol occidit atque resurgit,
 Lunaque mutata reparat dispendia formæ,
 Astraque, purpurei telis extincta diei,
 Rursus nocte vigent Hamules telluris alumni,
 Graminis herba virens, et florum pieta propago,
 Quos crudelis hyems lethali tabe peredit,
 Cum Zephyri vox blanda vocat, redutque sereni
 Temperies anni, fœcundo ð cespite surgunt
 Nos domini rerum nos, magna et pulchra munati,
 Cum breve ver vitæ robustaque transit ætas,
 Deficimus, nec nos ordo revolubilis auris
 Reddit in æthereas, tumuli neque claustra resolvit.

ON THE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

TRANSLATION OF THE FOREGOING

Suns that set, and moons that wane,
 Rise, and are restored again,
 Stars that orient day subdues,
 Night at her return renews

Herbs and flowers, the beauteous birth
 Of the genial womb of Earth,
 Suffer but a transient death
 From the winter's cruel breath
 Zephyr speaks, serenest skies
 Warm the glebe, and they arise
 We, alas! Earth's haughty kings,
 We, that promise mighty things,
 Losing soon life's happy prime,
 Droop, and fade, in little time,
 Spring returns, but not our bloom;
 Still 'tis winter in the tomb

EPITAPH ON JOHNSON.

HERE Johnson lies—a sage by all allow'd,
 Whom to have bred, may well make England proud,
 Whose prose was eloquence, by wisdom taught,
 The graceful vehicle of virtuous thought,
 Whose verse may claim—grave, masculine, and strong,
 Superior praise to the mere poet's song,
 Who many a noble gift from Heav'n possess'd,
 And faith at last, alone worth all the rest
 O man, immortal by a double prize,
 By fame on earth—by glory in the skies!

TO MISS C——, ON HER BIRTHDAY.

How many between east and west,
 Disgrace their parent earth,
 Whose deeds constrain us to detest
 The day that gave them birth!
 Not so when Stella's natal morn
 Revolving months restore,
 We can rejoice that she was born,
 And wish her born once more!

1 "If you like it, use it; if not, you know the remedy. It is serious, yet
 of grammar, like a bishop at a ball —(To Univ.)"

GRATITUDE

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH.

THIS cap, that so stately appears,
 With ribbon-bound tassel on high,
 Which seems by the crest that it rears
 Ambitious of brushing the sky
 This cap to my cousin I owe,
 She gave it, and gave me beside,
 Wreathed into an elegant bow,
 The ribbon with which it is tied

THIS wheel footed studying chair,
 Contrived both for toil and repose,
 Wide elbow'd, and wadded with hair,
 In which I both scribble and doze,
 Bright studded to dazzle the eyes,
 And rival in lustre of that
 In which, or astronomy lies,
Fair Cassiopeia sat

THESE carpets so soft to the foot,
 Caledonia's traffic and pride !
 Oh spare them, ye knights of the hoot,
 Escaped from a cross country ride !
 This table and mirror within,
 Secure from collision and dust,
 At which I oft shave cheek and chin,
 And periwig nicely adjust

THIS moveable structure of shelves,
 For its beauty admired, and use,
 And charged with octavos and twelves,
 The gayest I had to produce,
 Where flaming and scarlet and gold,
My poems enchanted I view,
 And hope, in due time, to behold
My Iliad and Odyssey too

THIS china, that decks the alcove,
 Which here people call a buffet,
 But what the gods call it above,
 Has ne'er been reveal'd to us yet :
 These curtains, that keep the room warm,
 Or cool, as the season demands,
 Those stoves that, for pattern and form,
 Seem the labour of Muleiber's hands :

All these are not half that I owe
 To One, from our earliest youth
 To me ever ready to show
 Benignity, friendship, and truth;
 For time, the destroyer declared
 And foe of our perishing kind,
 If even her face he has spared,
 Much less could he alter her mind
 Thus compass'd about with the goods
 And chattels of leisure and ease,
 I indulge my poetical moods
 In many such fancies as these,
 And fancies I fear they will seem—
 Poets' goods are not often so fine;
 The poets will swear that I dream,
 When I sing of the splendour of mine.

THE FLATTING-MILL.

AN ILLUSTRATION

WHEN a bar of pure silver, or ingot of gold,
 Is sent to be flatted or wrought into length,
 It is pass'd between cylinders often, and roll'd
 In an engine of utmost mechanical strength

Thus tortured and squeezed, at last it appears
 Like a loose heap of ribbon, a glittering show,
 Like music it tinkles and rings in your ears,
 And warm'd by the pressure is all in a glow

This process achieved, it is doom'd to sustain
 The thump after-thump of a gold beater's mallet,
 And at last is of service, in sickness or pain,
 To cover a pill from a delicate palate.

And as for the Poet! who dares undertake
 To urge reformation of national ill—
 His head and his heart are both likely to ache
 With the double employment of mallet and mill

If he wish to instruct, he must learn to delight,
 Smooth, ductile, and even, his fancy must flow,
 Must tinkle and glitter like gold to the sight,
 And catch in its progress a sensible glow

After all he must beat it as thin and as fine
 As the leaf that enfolds what an invalid swallows,
 For truth is unwelcome, however divine,
 And unless you adorn it, a nausea follows.

LINES

COMPOSED FOR A MEMORIAL OF ASHLEY COWPER, ESQ.,
 IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS DEATH

FARFWELL! endued with all that could engage
 All hearts to love thee, both in youth and age!
 In prime of life, for sprightliness enroll'd
 Among the gay, yet virtuous as the old,

In life's last stage, (O blessings rarely found!)
 Pleasant as youth with all its blossoms crown'd;
 Through every period of this changeful state
 Unchanged thyself—wise, good, affectionate!

Marble may flatter, and lest this should seem
 O'ercharged with praises on so dear a theme,
 Although thy worth be more than half suppress'd,
 Love *shall* be satisfied, and veil the rest

ON THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO LONDON,

THE NIGHT OF THE 17TH MARCH, 1789.

WHEN, long sequester'd from his throne,
 George took his seat again,
 By right of worth, not blood alone,
 Entitled here to reign

Then, Loyalty, with all his lamps
New trimm'd, a gallant show !
Chasing the darkness, and the damp,
Set London in a glow

'Twas hard to tell, of streets or squares,
Which form'd the chief display,
Those most resembling cluster'd stars,
Those the long milky way

Bright shone the roofs, the domes, the spires,
And rockets flew, self-driven,
To hang their momentary fires
Amid the vault of heaven

So, fire with water to compare,
The ocean serves, on high
Up spouted by a whale in air,
To express unwieldy joy.

Had all the pageants of the world
In one procession join'd,
And all the banners been unfurl'd
That heralds e'er design'd,

For no such sight had England's Queen
Foreaken her retreat,
Where George, recover'd, made a scene
Sweet always, doubly sweet

Yet glad she came that night to prove,
A witness undescried,
How much the object of her love
Was loved by all beside

Darkness the skies had mantled o'er
In aid of her design—
Darkness, O Queen ! ne'er call'd before
To veil a deed of thine !

On borrow'd wheels away she flies,
Resolved to be unknown,
And gratify no curious eyes
That night, except her own

Arrived, a night like noon she sees,
And hears the million hum,
As all by instinct, like the bees,
Had known their sov'reign come

Pleased she beheld aloft pourtray'd
 On many a splendid wall,
 Emblems of health, and heav'nly aid,
 And George the theme of all.

Unlike the enigmatic line,
 So difficult to spell,
 Which shook Belshazzar at his wine,
 The night his city fell

Soon, wat'ry grew her eyes and dim,
 But with a joyful tear,
 None else, except in pray'r for him,
 George ever drew from her ¹

It was a scene in every part
 Like those in fable feign'd,
 And seem'd by some magician's art
 Created and sustain'd

But other magic there, she knew,
 Had been exerted none,
 To raise such wonders in her view,
 Save love of George alone

That cordial thought her spirits cheer'd,
 And through the cumbrous throng,
 Not else unworthy to be fear'd,
 Convey'd her calm along

So, ancient poets say, serene
 The sea-maid rides the waves,
 And fearless of the billowy scene
 Her peaceful bosom laves

With more than astronomic eyes
 She view'd the sparkling show,
 One Georgian star adorns the skies,
 She myriads found below

¹ I may quote, in connexion with this poem, an anecdote in Cowper's letter to Mrs King, January 29, 1789:—"Engaged as I am with my own private anxieties I yet find leisure to interest myself not a little in the distresses of the Royal Family, especially in those of the Queen. The Lord Chancellor called the other morning on Lord Stafford; entering the room, he threw his hat into a sofa at the fireside, and clasping his hands, said, 'I have heard of distress, and I have read of it, but I never saw distress equal to that of the Queen.' Thus I know from particular and certain authority."

Yet let the glories of a night
 Like that, once seen, suffice,
 Heav'n grant us no such future sight,
 Such previous woe the price!

THE COCKFIGHTER'S GARLAND¹

Muse—Hide his name of whom I sing,
 Lest his surviving house thou bring
 For his sake into scorn,
 Nor speak the school from which he drew
 The much or little that he knew,
 Nor place where he was born

That such a man once was, may seem
 Worthy of record (if the theme
 Perchance may credit win)
 For proof to man, what man may prove,
 If grace depart, and demons move
 The source of guilt within

This man (for since the howling wild
 Disclaims him, man he must be styled)
 Wanted no good below,
 Gentle he was, if gentle birth
 Could make him such, and he had worth,
 If wealth could worth bestow

In social talk and ready jest,
 He shone superior at the feast,
 And qualities of mind,
 Illustrious in the eyes of those,
 Whose gay society he chose,
 Possess'd of ev'ry kind.

Metinks I see him powder'd red
 With bushy locks his well dress'd head
 Wing'd broad on either side
 The mossy rose bud not so sweet,
 His steeds superb, his carriage neat
 As lux'ry could provide

¹ "I have composed a small poem on a hideous subject, with which the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for April furnished me: it is, nevertheless, a true one, hideous as it is. Mr Bull and Mr Greathead, who both have seen the man on whose death it is written, know that he died as there related." (June 6, 1789)

Can such be cruel? Such can be
 Cruel as hell, and so was he,
 A tyrant entertain'd
 With barb'rous sports, whose foll deligh
 Was to encourage mortal fight
 'Twixt birds to battle train'd

One feather'd champion he possess'd,
 His darling far beyond the rest,
 Which never knew disgrace,
 Nor e'er had fought, but he made flow
 The life-blood of his fiercest foe,
 The Cæsar of his race

It chanced, at last, when, on a day,
 He push'd him to the desp'rate fray,
 His courage droop'd, he fled
 The master storm'd, the prize was lost
 And, instant, frantic at the cost,
 He doom'd his fav'rite dead

He seiz'd him fast, and from the pit
 Flew to the kitchen, snatch'd the spit,
 And, bring me cord, he cried,
 The cord was brought, and, at his word,
 To that dire implement the bird
 Alive and struggling tied

The horrid sequel asks a veil,
 And all the terrors of the tale
 That can be, shall be, sunk—
 Led by the sufferer's screams aright,
 His shock'd companions view the sight
 And him with fury drunk

All, suppliant, beg a milder fate
 For the old warrior at the grate.
 He deaf to pity's call
 Whirl'd round him rapid as a wheel
 His culinary club of steel,
 Death menacing on all

But vengeance hung not far remote,
 For while he stretch'd his clam'rous throat,
 And heav'n and earth defied,
 Big with a curse too closely pent
 That struggled vainly for a vent,
 He totter'd, reel'd, and died

'Tis not for us, with rash surmise,
 To point the judgments of the skies,
 But judgments plain as this,
 That, sent for man's instruction, bring
 A written label on their wing,
 'Tis hard to read amiss.

ON THE BENEFIT RECEIVED BY HIS MAJESTY FROM
 SEA-BATHING, IN THE YEAR 1789

O SOV'REIGN of an isle renown'd
 For undisputed sway
 Wherever o'er yon gulf profound
 Her navies wing their way,
 With juster claim she builds at length
 Her empire on the sea,
 And well may boast the waves her strength,
 Which strength restored to Thee

A TALE,

FOUNDED ON A FACT WHICH HAPPENED IN JANUARY, 1779

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial stream,
 There dwelt a wretch, who breathed but to blaspheme.
 In subterraneous caves his life he led,
 Black as the mine, in which he wrought for bread
 When on a day, emerging from the deep,
 A sabbath-day, (such sabbaths thousands keep!)
 The wages of his weekly toil he bore
 To buy a cock—whose blood might win him more,
 As if the noblest of the feather'd kind
 Were but for battle and for death design'd;
 As if the consecrated hours were meant
 For sport, to minds on cruelly intent,
 It chanced, (such chances Providence obey)
 He met a fellow-lab'rer on the way,
 Whose heart the same desires had once inflamed;
 But now the savage temper was reclaim'd.
 Persuasion on his lips had taken place,
 For all plead well who plead the cause of grace.

His iron heart with Scripture he assail'd,
 Woo'd him to hear a sermon, and prevail'd.
 His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,
 Swift, as the light'ning glimpse, the arrow flew.
 He wept, he trembled, cast his eyes around,
 To find a worse than he, but none he found
 He felt his sins, and wonder'd he should feel,
 Grace made the wound, and grace alone could heal

Now farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies
 He quits the sinner's for the martyr's prize
 That holy day was wash'd with many a tear,
 Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear
 The next, his swarthy brethren of the mine
 Learn'd, by his alter'd speech—the change divine!
 Laugh'd when they should have wept, and swore the day
 Was nigh, when he would swear as fast as they
 "No (said the penitent) such words shall share
 This breath no more, devoted now to pray'r
 O! if Thou seest, (thine eye the future sees)
 That I shall yet again blaspheme, like these,
 Now strike me to the ground, on which I kneel,
 Ere yet this heart relapses into steel,
 Now take me to that Heaven I once defied,
 Thy presence, thy embrace!" He spoke, and died!

STANZAS

SUBJOINED TO THE YEARLY BILL OF MORTALITY OF THE PARISH OF
 ALL-SAINTS, NORTHAMPTON, ANNO DOMINI 1787

*Pallida Mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
 Regumque turres* HORACE.

Pale Death with equal foot strikes wide the door
 Of royal halls and hovels of the poor

WHILE thirteen moons saw smoothly run
 The Nen's barge laden wave
 All these, life's rambling journey done,
 Have found their home, the grave

Was man (frail always) made more frail
 Than in foregoing years?
 Did famine or did plague prevail,
 That so much death appears?

No, these were vigorous as their sires,
 Nor plague nor famine came,
 This annual tribute Death requires,
 And never waives his claim

Like crowded forest-trees we stand,
 And some are marked to fall,
 The axe will smite at God's command,
 And soon shall smite us all.

Green as the bay-tree, ever green,
 With its new foliage on,
 The gay, the thoughtless, have I seen,
 I passed,—and they were gone

Read, ye that run, the awful truth
 With which I charge my page!
 A worm is in the bud of youth,
 And at the root of age

No present health can health insure
 For yet an hour to come,
 No medicine, though it oft can cure,
 Can always balk the tomb

And oh! that humble as my lot,
 And scorned as is my strain,
 These truths, though known, too much forgot,
 I may not teach in vain.

So prays your Clerk with all his heart,
 And, ere he quits the pen,
 Begs *you* for once to take *his* part,
 And answer all—Amen!¹

¹ "On Monday morning last, Sam brought me word that there was a man in the kitchen who desired to speak with me. I ordered him in. A plain, decent, elderly figure made its appearance, and being desired to sit, spoke as follows:—'Sir, I am clerk of the Parish of All Saints, in Northampton; brother of Mr O, the upholsterer. It is customary for the person in my office to annex to a bill of mortality, which he publishes at Christmas, a copy of verses. You will do me a great favour, sir, if you would furnish me with one.' To this I replied, 'Mr O, you have several men of genius in your town, why have you not applied to some of them? There is a namesake of yours in particular, O., the statuary, who, everybody knows, is a first-rate maker of verses. He surely is the man of all the world for your purpose.' 'Alas, sir! I have heretofore borrowed help from him, but he is a gentleman of so much reading, that the people of our town cannot understand him.' I confess to you I felt all the force of the compliment." (To Lady Hesketh, Nov 27 1787)

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.¹

FOR THE YEAR 1788

Quod adest, memento
Componere requus Cætera summis
Bitu feruntur HORACE

Improve the present hour, for all beside
Is a mere feather on a torrent's tide.

COULD I, from Heaven inspired, as sure presage
To whom the rising year shall prove his last,
As I can number in my punctual page,
And item down the victims of the past,

How each would trembling wait the mournful sheet
On which the press might stamp him next to die,
And, reading here his sentence, how replete
With anxious meaning, heavenward turn his eye!

Time then would seem more precious than the joys
In which he sports away the treasure now,
And prayer more seasonable than the noise
Of drunkards, or the music drawing bow

Then doubtless many a trisler, on the brink
Of this world's hazardous and headlong shore,
Forced to a pause, would feel it good to think,
Told that his setting sun must rise no more.

Ah, self-deceived! Could I prophetic say
Who next's fated, and who next to fall,
The rest might then seem privileged to play,
But, naming none, the Voice now speaks to all

Observe the dappled foresters, how light
They bound and airy o'er the sunny glado,
One falls—the rest, wide scattered with affright,
Vanish at once into the darkest shade

¹ "It is pretty well known, (the clerk took care it should be so,) both at Northampton and in this county, who wrote the Mortuary Verses. All that I know of their success is, that he sent a bundle of them to Maurice Smith, at Olney, who sold them for threepence a-piece—a high price for a *memento mori*, a commodity not generally in great request." (Feb 7, 1788.)

Had we their wisdom, should we, often warned,
 Still need repeated warnings, and at last,
 A thousand awful admonitions scorned,
 Die self-accused of life run all to waste ?

Sad waste ! for which no after thrift atones !
 The grave admits no cure for guilt or sin,
 Dewdrops may deck the turf that hides the bones,
 But tears of godly grief ne'er flow within

Learn then, ye living ! by the mouths be taught
 Of all those sepulchres, instructors true,
 That, soon or late, death also is your lot,
 And the next opening grave may yawn for you

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION

FOR THE YEAR 1789

—*Placidâque ibi demum morto quievit* *Vires*
 There calm at length he breathed his soul away

“ O most delightful hour by man
 Experienced here below,
 The hour that terminates his span,
 His folly and his woe !

“ Worlds should not bribe me back to tread
 Again life's dreary waste,
 To see again my day o'erspread
 With all the gloomy past.

“ My home henceforth is in the skies,
 Earth, seas, and sun, adieu !
 All heaven unfolded to my eyes,
 I have no sight for you.”

So spake Aspasio, firm possess'd
 Of faith's supporting rod,
 Then breathed his soul into its rest,
 The bosom of his God.

He was a man among the few
 Sincere on virtue's side;
 And all his strength from Scripture drew,
 To hourly use applied

That rule he prized, by that he feared,
 He hated, hoped, and loved,
 Nor ever frowned, or sad appeared,
 But when his heart had roved

For he was frail as thou or I,
 And evil felt within,
 But when he felt it, heaved a sigh,
 And loathed the thought of sin

Such lived Aspasio, and at last
 Called up from earth to heaven,
 The gulf of death triumphant passed,
 By gales of blessing driven

His joys be mine, each reader cries,
 When my last hour arrives,
 They shall be yours, my verse replies,
 Such only be your lives

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION

FOR THE YEAR 1790

No commentem recta sperno BUONANAM.
 Despise not my good counsel.

He who sits from day to day
 Where the prisoned lark is hung,
 Heedless of his loudest lay,
 Hardly knows that he has sung

Where the watchman in his round
 Nightly lifts his voice on high,
 None accustomed to the sound
 Wakes the sooner for his cry.

So your verse-man I, and Clerk,
Yearly in my song proclaim
Death at hand—yourselfes his mark—
And the fee's unerring aim

Dulc at my time I come,
Publishing to all aloud,—
Soon the grave must be your home,
And your only suit a shroud

But the monitory strain,
Oft repeated in your ears,
Seems to sound too much in vain,
Wins no notice, wakes no fears

Can a truth, by all confessed
Of such magnitude and weight,
Grow by being oft impressed,
Trivial as a parrot's prate?

Pleasure's call attention wins,
Hear it often as we may,
New as ever seem our sins,
Though committed every day

Death and judgment, Heaven and Hell—
These alone, so often heard,
No more move us than the bell
When some stranger is interred

Oh then, ere the turf or tomb
Cover us from every eye,
Spirit of instruction! come,
Make us learn that we must die

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1792

*Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
Subiecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis arari! — VIRG*

Happy the mortal who has traced effects
To their first cause, cast fear beneath his feet,
And Death and roaring Hell's voracious fires

THANKLESS for favours from on high,
Man thinks he fades too soon,
Though 'tis his privilege to die,
Would he improve the boon.

But he, not wise enough to scan
His blest concerns aright,
Would gladly stretch life's little span
To ages, if he might,

To ages in a world of pain,
To ages, where he goes
Galled by affliction's heavy chain,
And hopeless of repose

Strange fondness of the human heart,
Enamoured of its harm!
Strange world, that costs it so much smart,
And still has power to charm.

Whence has the world her magic power?
Why deem we Death a foe?
Recoil from weary life's best hour,
And covet longer woe?

The cause is Conscience — Conscience oft
Her tale of guilt renews,
Her voice is terrible though soft,
And dread of Death ensues

Then anxious to be longer spared
Man mourns his fleeting breath
All evils then seem light, compared
With the approach of Death

'Tis judgment shakes him, there's the fear,
That prompts the wish to stay
He has incurred a long arrears,
And must despair to pay

Pay!—follow Christ, and all is paid
His death your peace ensures,
Think on the grave where He was laid,
And calm descend to yours.

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1793

De sacris autem hæc sit una sententia, ut consentiantur
Cic. *De Leg*

But let us all concur in this one sentiment, that things sacred
be inviolable

He lives who lives to God alone,
And all are dead beside,
For other source than God is none
Whence life can be supplied

To live to God is to requite
His love as best we may,
To make his precepts our delight,
His promises our stay.

But life, within a narrow ring
Of giddy joys comprised,
Is falsely named, and no such thing,
But rather death disguised

Can life in them deserve the name,
Who only live to prove
For what poor toys they can disclaim
An endless life above?

Who, much diseased, yet nothing feel;
Much menaced, nothing dread,
Have wounds which only God can heal
Yet never seek His aid?

Who deem His house a useless place,
Faith, want of common sense,
And ardour in the Christian race,
A hypocrite's pretence?

Who trample order, and the day
Which God assorts His own
Dishonour with unhalloved play,
And worship chance alone?

If scorn of God's commands, impressed
On word and deed, imply
The better part of man unblessed
With life that cannot die,

Such want it, and that want, uncured
Till man resigns his breath,
Speaks him a criminal, assured
Of everlasting death

Sad period to a pleasant course!
Yet so will God repay
Sabbaths profaned without remorse,
And mercy cast away

THE POET'S NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

MARIA!¹ I have every good
For thee wished many a time,
Both sad and in a cheerful mood,
But never yet in rhyme

To wish thee fairer is no need,
More prudent or more sprightly,
Or more ingenious, or more freed
From temper-flaws unsightly

What favour then not yet possessed
Can I for thee require,
In wedded love already blessed,
To thy whole heart's desire?

¹ Throckmorton.

None here is happy but in part;
Full bliss is bliss divine,
There dwells some wish in every heart,
And doubtless one in thine

That wish, on some fair future day
Which fate shall brightly gild,
(Tis blameless, be it what it may,)
I wish it all fulfilled.

THE NEGRO'S COMPLAINT

FORCED from home and all its pleasures,
Afric's coast I left forlorn,
To increase a stranger's treasures,
O'er the raging billows borne
Men from England bought and sold me,
Paid my price in paltry gold,
But, though slave they have enrolled me,
Minds are never to be sold

Still in thought as free as ever,
What are England's rights, I ask,
Me from my delights to sever,
Me to torture, me to task?
Fleecy locks and black complexion
Cannot forfeit nature's claim,
Skins may differ, but affection
Dwells in white and black the same

Why did all creating Nature
Make the plant for which we toil?
Sighs must fan it, tears must water,
Sweat of ours must dress the soil
Think, ye masters, iron-hearted,
Lolling at your jovial boards,
Think how many backs have smarted
For the sweets your cane affords

Is there, as ye sometimes tell us,
Is there One who reigns on high?
Has He bid you buy and sell us,
Speaking from His throne, the sky?

Ask Him, if your knotted scourges,
Matches, blood extorting screws,
Are the means that duty urges
Agents of His will to use?

Hark! He answers!—wild tornadoes
Strewing yonder sea with wrecks,
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,
Are the voice with which He speaks.
He, foreseeing what vexations
Afric's sons should undergo,
Fixed their tyrants' habitations
Where his whirlwinds answer—No

By our blood in Afric wasted,
Ere our necks received the cham,
By the miseries that we tasted,
Crossing in your barks the main,
By our sufferings, since ye brought us
To the man-degrading mart,
All sustain'd by patience, taught us
Only by a broken heart!

Deem our nation brutes no longer,
Till some reason ye shall find
Worthier of regard and stronger
Than the colour of our kind
Slaves of gold, whose sordid dealings
Tarnish all your boasted powers,
Prove that you have human feelings,
Ere you proudly question ours!

PITY FOR POOR AFRICANS.

*Video meliora proboque,
Deteriora sequor*

I own I am shocked at the purchase of slaves,
And tear those who buy them and sell them are knaves,
What I hear of their hardships, their tortures, and groans,
Is almost enough to draw pity from stones

I pity them greatly, but I must be mum,
For how could we do without sugar and rum?
Especially sugar, so needful we see,
What, give up our desserts, our coffee, and tea!

Besides, if we do, the French, Dutch, and Danes
Will heartily thank us, no doubt, for our pains;
If we do not buy the poor creatures, they will;
And tortures and groans will be multiplied still

If foreigners likewise would give up the trade,
Much more in behalf of your wish might be said,
But while they get riches by purchasing blacks,
Pray tell me why we may not also go ~~snacks~~ ^{snacks}?

Your scruples and arguments bring to my mind
A story ^{so} pat, you may think it is coined,
On purpose to answer you, out of my mint,
But I can assure you I saw it in print

A youngster at school, more sedate than the rest,
Had once his integrity put to the test,
His comrades had plotted an orchard to rob,
And asked him to go and assist in the job

He was shocked, sir, like you, and answered, "Oh no!
What! rob our good neighbour? I pray you don't go"
Besides, the man's poor, his orchard's his bread
Then think of his children, for they must be fed"

"You speak very fine, and you look very grave,
But apples we want, and apples we'll have,
If you will go with us, you shall have a share,
If not, you shall have neither apple nor pear"

They spoke, and Tom pondered—"I see they will go;
 Poor man! what a pity to injure him so!
 Poor man! I would save him his fruit if I could.
 But staying behind will do him no good

"If the matter depended alone upon me,
 His apples might hang till they dropped from the tree
 But since they will take them, I think I'll go too,
 He will lose none by me, though I get a few "

His scruples thus silenced, Tom felt more at ease,
 And went with his comrades the apples to seize,
 He blamed and protested, but joined in the plan;
 He shared in the plunder, but pitied the man

THE MORNING DREAM

'Twas in the glad season of spring,
 Asleep at the dawn of the day,
 I dreamed what I cannot but sing,
 So pleasant it seemed as I lay
 I dreamed that on ocean afloat,
 Far hence to the westward I sailed,
 While the billows high lifted the boat,
 And the fresh-blowing breeze never failed

In the steerage a woman I saw,
 Such at least was the form that she wore,
 Whose beauty impressed me with awe,
 Ne'er taught me by woman before
 She sat, and a shield at her side
 Shed light, like a sun, on the waves,
 And, smiling divinely, she cried—
 "I go to make freemen of slaves "

Then raising her voice to a strain
 The sweetest that ear ever heard,
 She sung of the slave's broken chain
 Wherever her glory appeared.
 Some clouds, which had over us hung,
 Fled, chased by her melody clear,
 And methought while she liberty sung,
 'Twas liberty only to hear.

Thus swiftly dividing the flood,
 To a slave-cultured island we came,
 Where a demon, her onemy, stood—
 Oppression his terrible name,
 In his hand, as the sign of his sway,
 A scourge hung with lashes he bore,
 And stood looking out for his prey
 From Africa's sorrowful shore

But soon as approaching the land
 That goddess-like woman he viewed,
 The scourge he let fall from his hand,
 With blood of his subjects imbrued
 I saw him both sickon and die,
 And the moment the monster expired,
 Heard shouts that ascended the sky,
 From thousands with rapture inspired

Awaking, how could I but muse
 At what such a dream should betide?
 But soon my ear caught the glad news,
 Which served my weak thought for a guide,—
 That Britannia, renowned o'er the waves
 For the hatred she ever has shown
 To the black-sceptred rulers of slaves,
 Resolves to have none of her own

SWEET MEAT HAS SOUR SAUCE,

OR, THE SLAVE TRADE IN THE DUMPS

A TRADER I am to the African shore,
 But since that my trading is like to be o'er,
 I'll sing you a song that you ne'er heard before,
 Which nobody can deny, deny,
 Which nobody can deny

When I first heard the news it gave me a shock,
 Much like what they call an electrical knock,
 And now I am going to sell off my stock,
 Which nobody, &c

'Tis a curious assortment of dainty regales,
 To tickle the negroes with when the ship sails,
 Fine chains for the neck, and a cat with nine tails,
 Which nobody, &c.

Here's supple-jack plenty and store of rat-tan,
 That will wind itself round the sides of a man,
 As close as a hoop round a bucket or can,
 Which nobody, &c

Here's padlocks and bolts, and screws for the thumbs,
 That squeeze them so lovingly till the blood comes,
 They sweeten the temper like comfits or plums,
 Which nobody, &c

When a negro his head from his victuals withdraws,
 And clenches his teeth and thrusts out his paws,
 Here's a notable engine to open his jaws,
 Which nobody, &c.

Thus going to market, we kindly prepare
 A pretty black cargo of African ware,
 For what they must meet with when they get there,
 Which nobody, &c

'Twould do your heart good to see 'em below
 Lie flat on their backs all the way as we go,
 Like sprats on a gridiron, scores in a row,
 Which nobody, &c

But ah! if in vain I have studied an art,
 So gainful to me, all boasting apart,
 I think it would break my compassionate heart,
 Which nobody, &c.

For oh! how it enters my soul like an awl!
 This pity, which some people self-pity call,
 Is sure the most heart-piercing pity of all,
 Which nobody, &c

So this is my song, as I told you before,
 Come, buy off my stock, for I must no more
 Carry Cæsars and Pompeys to sugar-cane shore,
 Which nobody, &c.

EPIGRAM.

To purify their wine, some people bleed
 A lamb into the barrel, and succeed,
 No nostrum, planters say, is half so good
 To make fine sugar, as a negro's blood.
 Now lambs and negroes both are harmless things,
 And hence perhaps this wondrous virtue springs.
 'Tis in the blood of innocence alone—
 Good cause why planters never try their own

THE YEARLY DISTRESS,

OR, TITHING TIME AT STOOK, IN ESSEX.

COME, ponder well, for 'tis no jest,
 To laugh it would be wrong,
 The troubles of a worthy priest,
 The burthen of my song

This priest he merry is and blithe
 Three quarters of a year,
 But oh! it cuts him like a scythe
 When tithing time draws near

He then is full of fright and fears,
 As one at point to die,
 And long before the day appears
 He heaves up many a sigh.

For then the farmers come, jog, jog,
 Along the miry road,
 Each heart as heavy as a log,
 To make their payments good

In sooth, the sorrow of such days
 Is not to be expressed,
 When he that takes and he that pays
 Are both alike distressed.

Now all unwelcome at his gates
 The clumsy swains alight,
 With rueful faces and bald pates;—
 He trembles at the sight

And well he may, for well he knowu
 Each bumpkin of the clan,
 Instead of paying what he owes,
 Will cheat him if he can

So in they come—each makes his leg,
 And flings his head before,
 And looks as if he came to beg,
 And not to quit a score

“And how does miss and madam do,
 The little boy and all?”
 “All tight and well And how do you,
 Good Mr What-d’ye call?”

The dinner comes, and down they sit
 Were e’er such hungry folk?
 There’s little talking and no wit,
 It is no time to joke

One wipes his nose upon his sleeve,
 One spits upon the floor,
 Yet not to give offence or grieve,
 Holds up the cloth before

The punch goes round, and they are dull
 And lumpish still as ever,
 Like barrels with their bellies full,
 They only weigh the heavier

At length the busy time begins
 “Come, neighbours, we must wag—”
 The money chinks, down drop their chins
 Each lugging out his bag

One talks of mildew and of frost,
 And one of storms of hail,
 And one of pigs that he has lost
 By maggots at the tail

Quoth one, “A rarer man than you
 In pulpit none shall hear,
 But yet, methinks to tell you true,
 You sell it pluguy dear”

O why were farmers made so coarse
 Or clergy made so fine?
 A kick that scarce would move a horse,
 May kill a sound divine

Then let the boobies stay at home,
 'Twould cost him, I dare say,
 Less trouble taking twice the sum,
 Without the clowns that pay.

SONNET

ADDRESSED TO HENRY COWPER, ESQ

*On his emphatical and interesting Delivery of the Defence of Warren
 Hastings, Esq, in the House of Lords*

COWPER, whose silver voice, tasked sometimes hard
 Legends prolix delivers in the ears
 (Attentive when thou read'st) of England's peers,
 Let verse at length yield thee thy just reward
 Thou wast not heard with drowsy disregard,
 Expending late on all that length of plea
 Thy generous powers, but silence honoured thee,
 Mute as e'er gazed on orator or bard
 Thou art not voice alone, but hast beside
 Both heart and head, and couldst with music sweet
 Of Attic phrase and senatorial tone,
 Like thy renowned forefathers, far and wide
 Thy fame diffuse, praised not for utterance meet
 Of others' speech, but magic of thy own

THE DOG AND THE WATER LILY

NO FABLE

THE noon was shady, and soft airs
 Swept Ouse's silent tide,
 When 'scaped from literary cares,
 I wandered on his side

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,
 And high in pedigree,
 (Two nymphs¹ adorned with every grace
 That spaniel found for me,)

Now wantoned lost in flags and reeds
 Now starting into sight,
 Pursued the swallow o'er the meads,
 With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse displayed
 His lilies newly blown,
 Their beauties I intent surveyed,
 And one I wished my own.

With cane extended far I sought
 To steer it close to land,
 But still the prize, though nearly caught,
 Escaped my eager hand

Beau marked my unsuccessful pains
 With fixed considerate face,
 And puzzling set his puppy brains
 To comprehend the case

But with a cherup clear and strong,
 Dispersing all his dream,
 I thence withdrew, and followed long
 The windings of the stream

My ramble ended, I returned,
 Beau, trotting far before,
 The floating wreath again discerned,
 And plunging, left the shore

I saw him, with that hly cropped,
 Impatient swim to meet
 My quick approach, and soon he dropped
 The treasure at my feet

Charmed with the sight, the world I cried,
 Shall hear of this thy deed
 My dog shall mortify the pride
 Of man's superior breed:

¹ Sir Robert Gunning's daughter.

But chief myself I will enjoin,
 Awake at duty's call,
 To show a love as prompt as thine
 To Him who gives me all.

MOTTO FOR A CLOCK.

*Quam lenta accedit, quam velox præterit hora!
 Ut capias, patiens esto, sed esto vigil!*

Slow comes the hour, its passing speed how great!
 Waiting to seize it—vigilantly wait!

ON MRS MONTAGU'S FEATHER HANGINGS.

THE birds put off their every hue,
 To dress a room for Montagu
 The peacock sends his heavenly dyes,
 His rainbows and his starry eyes,
 The pheasant, plumes which round infold
 His mantling neck with downy gold,
 The cock, his arched tail's azure show,
 And, river-blanch'd, the swan his snow
 All tribes beside of Indian name,
 That glossy shine, or vivid flame,
 Where rises and where sets the day,
 Whate'er they boast of rich and gay,
 Contribute to the gorgeous plan,
 Proud to advance it all they can
 This plumage neither dashing shower,
 Nor blasts that shake the dripping bower,
 Shall drench again or discompose,
 But, screened from every storm that blows,
 It boasts a splendour ever new,
 Safe with protecting Montagu
 To the same patroness resort,
 Secure of favour at her court,
 Strong Genius, from whose forge of thought
 Forms rise, to quick perfection wrought,

Which, though new-born, with vigour move
 Like Pallas, springing armed from Jove,
 Imagination scattering round
 Wild roses over furrowed ground,
 Which Labour of his frown beguile,
 And teach Philosophy a smile,
 Wit flashing on Religion's side,
 Whose fires, to sacred Truth applied,
 The gem, though luminous before,
 Obtrude on human notice more,
 Like sunbeams on the golden height
 Of some tall temple playing bright;
 Well tutored Learning from his books
 Dismissed with grave, not haughty looks,
 Their order on his shelves exact,
 Not more harmonious or compact
 Than that, to which he keeps confined
 The various treasures of his mind,
 All these to Montagu's repair,
 Ambitious of a shelter there
 There Genius, Learning, Fancy, Wit,
 Their ruffled plumage calm relit,
 (For stormy troubles loudest roar
 Around their flight who highest soar,)
 And in her eye, and by her aid,
 Shine safe without a fear to fade
 She thus maintains divided sway
 With you bright regent of the day,
 The Plume and Poet both, we know,
 Their lustre to his influence owe,
 And she the works of Phœbus aiding,
 Both Poet saves and Plume from fading

ON THE DEATH OF MRS THROCKMORTON'S BULLFINCH

YE Nymphs, if e'er your eyes were red
 With tears o'er hapless fav'rites shed,
 O, share Maria's grief!
 Her fav'rite, even in his cage,
 (What will not hunger's cruel rage?)
 Assassined by a thief

Where Rhénus strays his vines among,
 The egg was laid from which he sprung;
 And though by nature mute,
 Or only with a whistle blessed,
 Well taught he all the sounds expressed
 Of flageolet or flute

The honours of his ébon poll
 Were brighter than the sleekest mole,
 His bosom of the hue
 With which Aurora decks the skies,
 When piping winds shall soon arise
 To sweep away the dew

Above, below, in all the house,
 Dire foe alike of bird and mouse,
 No cat had leave to dwell,
 And Bully's cage supported stood
 On props of smoothest shaven wood,
 Large-built and latticed well

Well-latticed—but the grate, alas !
 Not rough with wire of steel or brass,
 For Bully's plumage sake,
 But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,
 With which, when neatly peeled and dried,
 The swains their baskets make

Night veiled the pole all seemed secure
 When, led by instinct sharp and sure,
 Subsistence to provide,
 A beast forth sallied on the scout,
 Long backed, long tailed, with whiskered snout,
 And badger-coloured hide

He, entering at the study door,
 Its ample area 'gan explore,
 And something in the wind
 Conjectured, sniffing round and round,
 Better than all the books he found,
 Food chiefly for the mind

Just then, by adverse fate impressed,
 A dream disturbed poor Bully's rest,
 In sleep he seem'd to view
 A rat fast clinging to the cage,
 And, screaming at the sad presage,
 Awoke and found it true

For, aided both by ear and scent,
 Right to his mark the monster went,—
 Ah, Muse, forbear to speak
 Minute the horrors that ensued,
 His teeth were strong, the cage was wood,—
 He left poor Bully's beak

O, had he made that too his prey!
 That beak whence issued many a lay,
 Of such mellifluous tone,
 Might have repaid him well, I vowe,
 For silencing so sweet a throat,
 Fast stuck within his own.

Maria weeps,—the Muses mourn—
 So, when by Bacchanalians torn,
 On Thracian Hebrus' side
 The tree enchanter Orpheus fell,
 His head alone remained to tell
 The cruel death he died

AN EPISTLE TO AN AFFLICTED PROTESTANT LADY IN FRANCE

MADAM,

A STRANGER'S purpose in these lays
 Is to congratulate and not to praise
 To give the creature the Creator's due
 Were sin in me, and an offence to you
 From man to man, or e'en to woman paid,
 Praise is the medium of a knavish trade,
 A coin by craft for folly's use designed,
 Spurious, and only current with the blind
 The path of sorrow, and that path alone
 Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown,
 No traveller ever reach'd that blest abode,
 Who found not thorns and briars in his road.
 The world may dance along the flowery plain,
 Cheered as they go by many a sprightly strain;
 Where Nature has her mossy velvet spread,
 With unshod feet they yet securely tread;
 Admonished, scorn the caution and the friend,
 Bent all on pleasure, heedless of its end.

But He, who knew what human hearts would prove,
 How slow to learn the dictates of his love,
 That, hard by nature and of stubborn will,
 A life of ease would make them harder still,
 In pity to the souls his grace design'd
 To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
 Called for a cloud to darken all their years,
 And said "Go spend them in the vale of tears"
 O balmy gales of soul-reviving air!
 O salutory streams that murmur there!
 These flowing from the Fount of Grace above,
 Those breathed from lips of everlasting love
 The flinty soul indeed their feet annoys,
 Chill blasts of trouble nip their springing joys,
 An envious world will interpose its frown
 To mar delights superior to its own,
 And many a pang experienced still within,
 Reminds them of their hated inmate, Sin
 But ills of every shape and every name,
 Transformed to blessings, miss their cruel aim
 And every moment's calm that soothes the breast,
 Is given in earnest of eternal rest

Ah, be not sad, although thy lot be cast
 Far from the flock, and in a boundless waste!
 No shepherd's tents within thy view appear,
 But the chief Shepherd even there is near,
 Thy tender sorrows and thy plaintive strain
 Flow in a foreign land, but not in vain,
 Thy tears all issue from a source divine,
 And every drop bespeaks a Saviour thine
 So once in Gideon's fleece the dews were found,
 And drought on all the drooping herbs around

THE NEEDLESS ALARM

A TALE

THERE is a field, through which I often pass,
 Thick overspread with moss and silky grass,
 Adjoining close to Kilwick's echoing wood,
 Where oft the bitch-fox hides her hapless brood,
 Reserved to solace many a neighbouring squire,
 That he may follow them through brake and briar,
 Contusion hazarding of neck or spine,
 While rural gentlemen call sport divine

A narrow brook, by rushy banks concealed,
 Runs in a bottom, and divides the field;
 Oaks intersperse it, that land once a head,
 But now wear crests of oven wood instead,
 And where the land slopes to its watery bourn
 Wide yawns a gulf beside a ragged thorn,
 Bricks line the sides, but shiver'd long ago,
 And horrid brambles intertwine below,
 A hollow scoop'd, I judge, in ancient time,
 For baking earth, or burning rock to lime
 Not yet the hawthorn bore her berries red,
 With which the fieldfare, wintry guest, is fed;
 Nor autumn yet had brushed from every spray,
 With her chill hand, the mellow leaves away;
 But corn was housed, and beans were in the stack,
 Now therefore issued forth the spotted pack,
 With tails high-mounted, ears hung low, and throats
 With a whole gamut fill'd of heavenly notes,
 For which, alas! my destiny severe,
 Though ears she gave me two, gave me no ear
 The sun, accomplishing his early march,
 His lamp now planted on heaven's topmost arch,
 When, exercise and air my only aim,
 And heedless whither, to that field I came,
 Ere yet with ruthless joy the happy hound
 Told hill and dale that Roynard's track was found,
 Or with the high-raised horn's melodious clang
 All Kilwick¹ and all Dingleberry¹ rang

Sheep grazed the field, some with soft bosom
 pressed

The herb as soft, while nibbling stray'd the rest,
 Nor noise was heard but of the hasty brook,
 Struggling, detained in many a petty nook
 All seemed so peaceful, that, from them conveyed,
 To me their peace by kind contagion spread.

But when the huntsman, with distended cheek,
 'Gan make his instrument of music speak,
 And from within the wood that crash was heard,
 Though not a hound from whom it burst appear'd,
 The sheep recumbent, and the sheep that grazed,
 All huddling into phalanx, stood and gazed,
 Admiring, terrified, the novel strain,
 Then coursed the field around, and coursed it round
 again

¹ Two woods belonging to John Throckmorton Esq.

But recollecting with a sudden thought,
That sight in circles urged advanced them nought,
They gathered close around the old pit's brink,
And thought again—but know not what to think

The man to solitude accustomed long,
Perceives in o'rything that lives a tongue,
Not animals alone, but shrubs and trees
Have speech for him, and understood with ease,
After long drought, when rains abundant fall,
He hears the herbs and flowers rejoicing all,
Knows what the freshness of their hue implies,
How glad they catch the largess of the skies,
But, with precision nicer still, the mind
He scans of every locomotive kind,
Birds of all feather, beasts of every name,
That serve mankind, or shun them, wild or tame,
The looks and gestures of their griefs and fears
Have all articulation in his ears,
He spells them true by intuition's light,
And needs no glossary to set him right

This truth premised was needful as a text,
To win due credence to what follows next

Awhile they mused, surveying o'ery face,
Thou hadst supposed them of superior race,
Their periwigs of wool and fears combined,
Stamped on each countenance such marks of mind,
That sage they seemed, as lawyers o'er a doubt,
Which, puzzling long, at last they puzzle out,
Or academic tutors, teaching youths,
Sure ne'er to want them, mathematic truths,
When thus a mutton statcher than the rest,
A ram, the ewes and wethers sad addressed
"Friends! we have lived too long I never heard
Sounds such as these, so worthy to be feared
Could I believe, that winds for ages pent
In earth's dark womb have found at last a vent,
And from their prison-house below arise,
With all these hideous howlings to the skies,
I could be much composed, nor should appear,
For such a cause, to feel the slightest fear
Yourselves have seen, what time the thunders rolled
All night, me resting quiet in the fold
Or heard we that tremendous bray alone,
I could expound the melancholy tone,
Should deem it by our old companion made,
The ass, for he, we know, has lately strayed.

And, being lost, perhaps, and wandering wide,
Might be supposed to clamour for a guide
But ah! those dreadful yells what soul can bear
That owns a carcass, and not quake for fear?
Demons produce them doubtless, brazen-clawed.
And fanged with brass the demons are abroad,
I hold it therefore wisest and most fit
That, life to save, we leap into the pit."

Him answered then his loving mate and true,
But more discreet than he, a Cambrian ewe.

"How? leap into the pit our life to save?
To save our life leap all into the grave?
For can we find it less? Contemplate first
The depth how awful! falling there, we burst
Or should the brambles interposed our fall
In part abate, that happiness were small,
For with a race like theirs no chance I see
Of peace or ease to creatures clad as we
Meantime, noise kills not Be it Dapple's brav.
Or be it not, or be it whose it may,
And rush those other sounds, that seem by tongues
Of demons uttered, from whatever lungs,
Sounds are but sounds, and, till the cause appear,
We have at least commodious standing here
Come fiend, come fury, giant, monster, blast
From earth or hell, we can but plunge at last."

While thus she spake, I fainter heard the peals,
For Reynard, close attended at his heels
By panting dog, tired man, and spattered horse,
Through more good fortune, took a different course
The flock grew calm again, and I, the road
Following that led me to my own abode,
Much wonder'd that the silly sheep had found
Such cause of terror in an empty sound,
So sweet to huntsman, gentleman, and hound

MORAL

Beware of desperate steps The darkest day,
Live till to-morrow, will have passed away

ANNUS MEMORABILIS, 1789

WRITTEN IN COMMEMORATION OF HIS MAJESTY'S HAPPY RECOVERY

I HANSACKED, for a theme of song,
 Much ancient chronicle, and long,
 I read of bright embattled fields,
 Of trophied helmets, spears, and shields
 Of chiefs whose single arm could boast
 Prowess to dissipate a host,
 Through tomes of fable and of dream
 I sought an eligible theme,
 But none I found, or found them shared
 Already by some happier bard

To modern times, with truth to guide
 My busy search, I next applied,
 Here cities won and fleets dispersed,
 Urged loud a claim to be rehearsed,
 Deeds of unperishing renown,
 Our father's triumphs and our own

Thus as the bee, from bank to bower,
 Assiduous sips at every flower,
 But rests on none till that be found
 Where most nectareous sweets abound,
 So I from theme to theme display'd
 In many a page historic stray'd,
 Siege after siege, fight after fight,
 Contemplating with small delight,
 (For feats of sanguinary hue
 Not always glitter in my view,)
 Till, settling on the current year,
 I found the far-sought treasure near
 A theme for poetry divine,
 A theme to ennoble even mine,
 In memorable eighty-nine

The spring of eighty-nine shall be
 An era cherish'd long by me,
 Which joyful I will oft record,
 And thankful at my frugal board;
 For then the clouds of eighty-eight,
 That threaten'd England's trembling state
 With loss of what she least could spare
 Her sovereign's tutelary care,

One breath of heaven, that cried—Restore!
Chased, never to assemble more,
And for the richest crown on earth,
If valued by its wearer's worth,
The symbol of a righteous reign
Sat fast on George's brows again

Then peace and joy again possess'd
Our Queen's long-agitated breast,
Such joy and peace as can be known
By sufferers like herself alone,
Who losing, or supposing lost,
The good on earth they valued most,
For that dear sorrow's sake forego
All hope of happiness below,
Then suddenly regain the prize,
And flash thanksgivings to the skies!

O Queen of Albion, queen of isles!
Since all thy tears were changed to smiles,
The eyes, that never saw thee, shine
With joy not unallied to thine
Transports not chargeable with art
Illumine the land's remotest part,
And strangers to the air of courts,
Both in their toils and at their sports,
The happiness of answered prayers,
That gilds thy features, show in theirs

If they who on thy state attend,
Awe-struck, before thy presence bend,
'Tis but the natural effect
Of grandeur that ensures respect,
But she is something more than Queen
Who is beloved where never seen

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK,

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANNE BODHAM¹

O THAT those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me,
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it!) here shines on me still the same

Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidst me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own;
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she

My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile!—it answers—Yes
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was—Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown

¹ Received, February 25, 1700 To Lady Hesketh he wrote (April 30, 1700) —"The General's approbation of my picture verses gave me much pleasure I wrote them not without tears, therefore I presume it may be that they are felt by others Should he offer me my father's picture, I shall gladly accept it. A melancholy pleasure is better than none—nay, verily, better than most"

May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
 The parting word shall pass my lips no more!¹
 Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern
 Oft gave me promise of thy quick return,
 What ardently I wished, I long believed,
 And, disappointed still, was still deceived;
 By expectation every day beguiled,
 Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
 Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
 Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
 I learned at last submission to my lot,
 But though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot
 Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,¹
 Children not thine have trod my nursery floor,
 And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
 Drew me to school along the public way,
 Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
 In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
 Is now become a history little known,
 That once we called the pastoral house our own
 Short-lived possession! But the record fair,
 That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
 Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
 A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
 What thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid,
 Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
 The biseuit, or confectionary plum,
 The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
 By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed
 All this, and more endearing still than all,
 Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
 Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks.
 That humour interposed too often makes;
 All this still legible in memory's page,
 And still to be so to my latest age,
 Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
 Such honours to thee as my numbers may,
 Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
 Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.
 Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
 When, playing with thy vesture's tissue flowers,
 The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
 I pricked them into paper with a pin,

¹ The rectory at Great Berkhamstead, where he was born

(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
 Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and smile,)
 Could those few pleasant days again appear,
 Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
 I would not trust my heart,—the dear delight
 Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might —
 But no—what here we call our life is such,
 So little to be loved, and thou so much,
 That I should ill requite thee to constrain
 Thy unbound spirit into bonds again

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
 (The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed,
 Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
 Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
 There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
 Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
 While airs impregnated with incense play
 Around her, fanning light her streamers gay,
 So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore
 "Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"
 And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
 Of life long since has anchored by thy side
 But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
 Always from port withheld, always distressed,—
 Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
 Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost.
 And day by day some current's thwarting force
 Sets me more distant from a prosperous course
 Yet O, the thought that thou art safe, and he!
 That thought is joy, arrive what may to me
 My boast is not that I deduce my birth
 From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth,
 But higher far my proud pretensions rise,—
 The son of parents passed into the skies
 And now, farewell!—Time unrevoked has run
 His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.
 By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
 I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
 To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
 Without the sin of violating thine
 And while the wings of fancy still are free,
 And I can view this mimic form of thee,
 Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
 Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

TO THE MEMORY OF DR LLOYD¹

Our good old friend is gone, gone to his rest,
 Whose social converse was, itself, a feast
 O ye of riper age, who recollect
 How once ye loved, and eyed him with respect,
 Both in the firmness of his better day,
 While yet he ruled you with a father's sway,
 And when, impair'd by time and glad to rest,
 Yet still with looks in mild complacence dress'd,
 He took his annual seat and mingled here
 His sprightly vein with yours—now drop a tear
 In morals blameless as in manners meek,
 He knew no wish that he might blush to speak,
 But, happy in whatever state below,
 And richer than the rich in being so,
 Obtain'd the hearts of all, and such a meed
 At length from One, as made him rich indeed²

¹ I make no apology for the introduction of the following lines, though I have never learned who wrote them Their elegance will sufficiently recommend them to persons of classical taste and erudition, and I shall be happy if the English version that they have received from me, be found not to dishonour them Affection for the memory of the worthy man whom they celebrate, alone prompted me to this endeavour

SPOKEN AT THE WESTMINSTER ELECTION NEXT AFTER HIS DECEASE

ABIT senex! perit senex amabilis!
 Quo non fuit jucundior
 Lugeto vos, ætas quibus maturior
 Senem coleudum præstitit,
 Sen quando, viribus valentioribus
 Firmoque fretus pectore,
 Florentiori vos juventute oxoolens
 Curâ forebat patriâ,
 Seu quando fractus, jamque donatus rude
 Vultu sed usque blandulo,
 Miscero gaudebat suis facetiis
 His annis leporibus
 Vixit probus, purâque simplex indole,
 Blandisque comis moribus,
 Et dives æquâ mente—charus omnibus
 Unius auctus munere
 Ite, tituli! meritis beatioribus
 Aptato laudes debitas!
 Nec inuidebat ille, si quibus favens
 Fortuna plus arriserat
 Placide senex! levi quiescas cespito
 Ptsi superbum nec viro tibi
 Docus sit inditum, uxo mortuo
 Lapis notatus nomine

² He was usher and under master of Westminster near fifty years, and retired from his occupation when he was near seventy, with a handsome pension from the King The Latin verses, we are informed by Southey, were written by Dr Vincent

Hence, then, ye titles, hence, not wanted here,
 Go, garrison merit in a brighter sphere,
 The brows of those whose more exalted lot
 He could congratulate, but envied not
 Light lie the turf, good Senior! on thy breast,
 And tranquil as thy mind was, be thy rest!
 Tho', living, thou hadst more desert than fame, -
 And not a stone, now, chronicles thy name

TO MRS THROCKMORTON,

ON HER BEAUTIFUL TRANSCRIPT OF HORACE'S ODE
 "AD LIBRUM SUUM," FEBRUARY 1790

MARIA, could Horace have guess'd
 What honour awaited his ode
 To his own little volume address'd,
 The honour which you have bestow'd!
 Who have traced it in characters here,
 So elegant, even, and neat,
 He had laugh'd at the critical sneer
 Which he seems to have trembled to meet

And sneer, if you please, he had said,
 A nymph shall hereafter arise
 Who shall give me, when you are all dead,
 The glory your malice denies,
 Shall dignity give to my lay,
 Although but a mere bagatelle,
 And even a poet shall say,
 Nothing ever was written so well

INSCRIPTION

FOR A STONE ERECTED AT THE SOWING OF A GROVE OF OAKS
 CHILLINGTON, THE SEAT OF T GIFFARD, ESQ, 1790

OTHER stones the era tell,
 When some feeble mortal fell,
 I stand here to date the birth
 Of these hardy sons of earth

Which shall longest brave the sky,
 Storm and frost—these oaks or I?
 Pass an age or two away,
 I must moulder and decay,
 But the years that crumble me
 Shall invigorate the tree,
 Spread its branch, dilate its size,
 Lift its summit to the skies
 Cherish honour, virtue, truth,
 So shalt thou prolong thy youth.
 Wanting these, however fast
 Man be fix'd, and form'd to last,
 He is lifeless even now,
 Stone at heart, and cannot grow.

ANOTHER,

FOR A STONE ERECTED ON A SIMILAR OCCASION AT THE SAME
 PLACE IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR—ANNO 1791.

READER! behold a monument
 That asks no sigh or tear,
 Though it perpetuate the event
 Of a great burial here

H Y M N

FOR THE USE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT OLNEY

HEAR Lord, the song of praise and pray'r
 In heaven thy dwelling-place,
 From infants made the public care,
 And taught to seek thy face!

'Thanks for thy Word and for thy Day,
 And grant us, we implore,
 Never to waste in sinful play
 Thy holy Sabbaths more

Thanks that we hear—but oh! impart
 To each desires sincere,
 That we may listen with our heart,
 And learn as well as hear

'or if vain thoughts the mind engage
Of elder far than we,
What hope that at our heedless age
Our minds should e'er be free?

Such hope, if thou our spirits take
Under thy gracious sway,
Who canst the wisest wiser make,
And babes as wise as they

Wisdom and bliss thy word bestows,
A sun that ne'er declines,
And be thy mercies show'r'd on those
Who placed is where it shines¹

STANZAS

ON THE LATE INDECENT LIBERTIES TAKEN WITH THE
REMAINS OF THE GREAT MILTON—ANNO 1790²

"ME too, perchance, in future days,
The sculptur'd stone shall show,
With Paphian myrtle or with bays
Parnassian on my brow

"But I, ere that season come,
Escaped from every care,
Shall reach my refuge in the tomb
And sleep securely there"³

So sang, in Roman tone and style,
The youthful bard, ere long
Ordain'd to grace his native isle
With her sublimest song

This hymn was written at the request of the Rev James Bean, then Vicar of Olney, to be sung by the children of the Sunday schools of that town, after a charity sermon, preached at the parish church for their benefit, on Sunday, July 31, 1790.—JOHN JOHNSON

² A coffin, supposed to be that of Milton, was opened at St Giles's, Cripplegate, in the beginning of August

³ Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
Neotens aut Paphia myrta aut Parnasside lauri
Fronde comas, at ego securus pace quiescam

MILTON—MANUSC.

Who then but must conceive disdain,
 Hearing the deed unblest
 Of wretches who have dar'd profane
 His dread sepulchral rest?

All fare the hands that bear'd the stone
 Where Milton's ashes lay,
 That trembled not to grasp his bones
 And steal his dust away!

O ill-requited bard! neglect
 Thy living worth repaid
 And blind idolatrous respect
 As much affronts thee dead

TO MRS KING.

OF HER KIND PRESENT TO THE AUTHOR—A PATCHWORK
 COUNTERPART OF HER OWN MAKING

THE Bard, if e'er he feel at all
 Must sure be quicken'd by a call
 Both on his heart and head,
 To pay with tuneful thanks the care
 And kindness of a Lady fair
 Who deigns to deck his bed

A bed like this, in ancient time,
 On Ida's barren top sublime,
 (As Homer's Epic shows)
 Composed of sweetest vernal flow'rs,
 Without the aid of sun or show'rs
 For Jove and Juno rose

Less beautiful, however gay,
 Is that which in the scorching day
 Receives the weary swain
 Who, laying his long scythe aside,
 Sleeps on some bank with daisies pied,
 Till roused to toil again

What labours of the loom I see!
 Looms numberless have groan'd for me!

Should ev'ry maiden come
To scramble for the patch that bears
The impress of the robe she wears,
The bell would toll for some

And oh! what havoc would ensue!
This bright display of ev'ry hue
All in a moment fled!
As if a storm should strip the bow'rs
Of all their tendrils, leaves, and flow'rs—
Each pocketing a shred.

Thanks, then, to ev'ry gentle Fair
Who will not come to peck me bare,
As bird of borrow'd feather,
And thanks to One, above them all,
The gentle Fair of Pertenhall,
Who put the whole together.

ANECDOTE OF HOMER.

Certain potters, while they were busied in baking their ware, seeing Homer at a small distance, and having heard much said of his wisdom, called to him, and promised him a present of their commodity, and of such other things as they could afford, if he would sing to them, when he sang as follows —

PAY me my price, Potters! and I will sing
Attend, O Pallas! and with lifted arm
Protect their oven, let the cups and all
The sacred vessels blacken well, and baked
With good success, yield them both fair renown
And profit, whether in the market sold
Or street, and let no strife ensue between us
But, oh ye Potters! if with shameless front
Ye falsify your promise, then I leave
No mischief uninvoked t' avenge the wrong
Come, Syntrips, Smaragus, Sabactes, c me,
And Asbetus, nor let your direst dread
Omodamus, delay! Fire seize your house,
May neither house nor vestibule escape,

* No title is prefixed to this piece, but it appears to be a translation of one of the *Ερυπάρματα* of Homer, called *Ο Καμινός*, or the Furnace. The pre-
fatory lines are from the Greek of Herodotus, or whoever was the author of
the Life of Homer ascribed to him — JOHN JOHNSON

May ye lament to see confusion mar
 And mingle the whole labour of your hands,
 And may a sound fill all your ovens, such
 As of a horse grinding his provender,
 While all your pots and flagons bounce within.
 Come hither, also, daughter of the sun,
 Circe, the sorceress, and with thy drugs
 Poison themselves, and all that they have made;
 Como also, Chiron, with thy num'rous troop
 Of Centaurs, as well those who died beneath
 The club of Hercules, as who escaped,
 And stamp their crockery to dust, down fall
 Their chimney; let them see it with their eyes
 And howl to see the ruin of their art,
 While I rejoice, and if a potter stoop
 To peep into his furnace, may the fire
 Flash in his face and scorch it, that all men
 Observe, thenceforth, equity and good faith

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE JOHN THORNTON, ESQ

POETS attempt the noblest task they can,
 Praising the Author of all good in man,
 And, next, commemorating worthies lost
 The dead in whom that good abounded most
 Thee, therefore, of commercial fame, but more
 Famed for thy probity from shore to shore
 Thee, THORNTON! worthy in some page to shine,
 As honest and more eloquent than mine,
 I mourn, or, since thrice happy thou must be,
 The world, no longer thy abode, not thee,
 Thee to deplore, were grief mispent indeed,
 It were to weep that goodness has its meed,
 That there is bliss prepared in yonder sky,
 And glory for the virtuous, when they die

What pleasure can the miser's fondled hoard,
 Or spendthrift's prodigal excess afford,
 Sweet as the privilege of healing woe
 By virtue suffer'd combating below?
 That privilege was thine, Heaven gave thee means
 To illumine with delight the saddest scenes,
 Till thy appearance chased the gloom, forlorn
 As midnight, and despairing of a morn

Thou hadst an industry in doing good,
 Restless as he who toils and sweats for food,
 Av'rice, in thee, was the desire of wealth,
 By rust unperishable or by stealth,
 And if the genuine worth of gold depend
 On application to its noblest end,
 Thine had a value in the scales of Heav'n,
 Surpassing all that mine or mint had giv'n.
 And, tho' God made thee of a nature prone
 To distribution boundless of thy own,
 And still by motives of religious force
 Impell'd thee more to that heroic course,
 Yet was thy liberality discreet,
 Nice in its choice, and of a temper'd heat,
 And though in act unwearied, secret still,
 As in some solitude the summer rill
 Refreshes, where it winds, the faded green,
 And cheers the drooping flowers, unheard, unseen

Such was thy charity, no sudden start,
 After long sleep, of passion in the heart,
 But steadfast principle, and, in its kind,
 Of close relation to th' eternal mind,
 Traced easily to its true source above,
 To Him whose works bespeak his nature, Love

Thy bounties all were Christian, and I make
 This record of thee for the Gospel's sake,
 That the incredulous themselves may see
 Its use and power exemplified in Thee

THE FOUR AGES¹

BRIEF FRAGMENT OF AN EXTENSIVE PROJECTED FORM

"I COULD be well content, allow'd the use
 Of past experience, and the wisdom glean'd
 From worn-out follies, now acknowledged such,
 To recommence life's trial, in the hope
 Of fewer errors, on a second proof!"

¹ Two years after this fragment was composed, Cowper told Hayley—"The utmost that I aspire to—and Heaven knows with how feeble a hope—is to write at some better opportunity, and when my hands are free, 'THE FOUR AGES' "

Thus, while grey evening hail'd the wind, and call'd
 Fresh odours from the shrubb'ry at my side,
 Taking my lonely winding walk, I mused,
 And held accusom'd conference with my heart,
 When from within it thus a voice replied

“Couldst thou in truth? and art thou taught at
 length

Thy wisdom, and but thus, from all the past?
 Is not the pardon of thy long arrears,
 Time wasted, violated laws, abuse
 Of talents, judgments, mercies, better far
 Than opportunity vouchsafed to err
 With less excuse, and haply, worse effect?”

I heard, and acquiesced then to and fro
 Oft pacing, as the mariner his deck,
 My grav'ly bounds, from self to human kind
 I pass'd, and next consider'd—what is man?

Knows he his origin? can he ascend
 By reminiscence to his earliest date?
 Slept he in Adam? and in those from him
 Through num'rous generations, till he found
 At length his destined moment to be born?
 Or was he not, till fashion'd in the womb?
 Deep myst'ries both! which schoolmen much have
 toil'd
 To unriddle, and have left them myst'ries still

It is an evil incident to man,
 And of the worst, that unexplored he leaves
 Truths useful and attainable with ease,
 To search forbidden deeps, where myst'ry lies
 Not to be solved, and useless, if it might
 Myst'ries are food for angels, they digest
 With ease, and find them nutriment, but man,
 While yet he dwells below, must stoop to glean
 His manna from the ground, or starve, and die

THE JUDGMENT OF THE POETS.

Two nymphs, both nearly of an age,
 Of numerous charms possess'd,
 A warm dispute once chanced to wage,
 Whose temper was the best

The worth of each had been complete,
 Had both alike been mild
 But one, although her smile was sweet
 Frown'd oft'ner than she smiled

And in her humour, when she frown'd,
 Would raise her voice and roar,
 And shake with fury to the ground
 The garland that she wore

The other was of gentler cast,
 From all such frenzy clear,
 Her frowns were seldom known to last,
 And never proved severe

To poets of renown in song
 The nymphs refer'd the cause,
 Who, strange to tell, all judg'd it wrong,
 And gave misplaced applause

They gentle call'd, and kind and soft,
 The suppliant and the scold,
 And though she changed her mood so oft,
 That failing left untold

No judges, sure, were e'er so mad,
 Or so resolved to err—
 In short, the charms her sister had
 They lavish'd all on her

Then, thus the God whom fondly they
 Their great Inspirer call,
 Was heard, one genial summer's day,
 To reprimand them all

"Since thus ye have combined," he said,
 "My fav'rite nymph to slight,
 Adorning May, that peevish maid,
 With June's undoubted right,

“ The minx shall, for your folly's sake,
 Still prove herself a shrew,
 Shall make your scribbling fingers ache,
 And pinch your noses blue ”

EPITAPH ON MRS M HIGGINS, OF WESTON

LAURELS may flourish round the conqu'ror's tomb,
 But happiest they, who win the world to come
 Believers have a silent field to fight,
 And their exploits are veil'd from human sight
 They in some nook, where little known they dwell,
 Kneel, pray in faith, and rent the hosts of hell;
 Eternal triumphs crown their toils divine,
 And all those triumphs, Mary, now are thine.

THE RETIRED CAT.

A POET'S cat, sedate and grave
 As poet well could wish to have,
 Was much addicted to inquire
 For nooks to which she might retire,
 And where, secure as mouse in chink,
 She might repose, or sit and think
 I know not where she caught the trick—
 Nature perhaps herself had cast her
 In such a mould PHILOSOPHIQUE,
 Or else she learn'd it of her master
 Sometimes ascending, *debonnair*,
 An apple tree, or lofty pear,
 Lodg'd with convenience in the fork,
 She watch'd the gard'ner at his work;
 Sometimes her ease and solace sought
 In an old empty wat'ring-pot,
 There wanting nothing, save a fan,
 To seem some nymph in her sedan
 Apparell'd in exactest sort,
 And ready to be borne to court.

But love of change it seems has place,
 Not only in our wiser race,

Cats also feel, as well as we,
 That passion's force, and so did she.
 Her clumbing, she began to find,
 Expos'd her too much to the wind,
 And the old utensil of tin
 Was cold and comfortless within
 She therefore wish'd instead of those
 Some place of more serene repose,
 Where neither cold might come, nor air
 Too rudely wanton with her hair,
 And sought it in the likeliest mode
 Within her master's snug abode

A draw'r, it chanc'd, at bottom lined
 With linen of the softest kind,
 With such as merchants introduce
 From India, for the ladies' use,
 A draw'r impending o'er the rest,
 Half open in the topmost chest,
 Of depth enough, and none to spare,
 Invited her to slumber there,
 Purs'd with delight beyond expression,
 Surveyed the scene and took possession.
 Recumbent at her ease ere long,
 And lull'd by her own humdrum song,
 She left the cares of life behind,
 And slept as she would sleep her last,
 When in came, housewifely inclined,
 The chambermaid, and shut it fast,
 By no malignity impell'd,
 But all unconscious whom it held.

Awaken'd by the shock, (cried puss)
 "Was ever cat attended thus!
 Tho open drawer was left, I see,
 Merely to prove a nest for me,
 For soon as I was well composed
 Then came the maid and it was closed
 How smooth these 'kerchiefs and how sweet!
 Oh what a delicate retreat!
 I will resign myself to rest
 Till Sol declining in the west
 Shall call to supper, when, no doubt,
 Susan will come and let me out"

The evening came, the sun descended,
 And puss remained still unattended.
 The night roll'd tardily away,
 (With her indeed, 'twas never day)
 The sprightly morn her course renew'd,
 The evening grey again ensued.
 And puss came into mind no more
 Than if entomb'd the day before
 With hunger pinch'd, and pinch'd for room
 She now presaged approaching doom,
 Nor slept a single wink or purr'd,
 Conscious of jeopardy incurr'd

That night, by chance, the poet watching
 Heard an inexplicable scratching,
 His noble heart went pit-a-pat,
 And to himself he said—"What's that?"
 He drew the curtain at his side,
 And forth he peep'd, but nothing spied,
 Yet, by his ear directed, guess'd
 Something imprison'd in the chest,
 And doubtful what, with prudent care
 Resolv'd it should continue there
 At length, a voice which well he knew,
 A long and melancholy mew,
 Saluting his poetic ears,
 Consol'd him and dispell'd his fears,
 He left his bed he trod the floor,
 He 'gan in haste the drawers explore,
 The lowest first, and without stop
 The rest in order to the top
 For 'tis a truth well known to most,
 That whatsoever thing is lost,
 We seek it, ere it come to light,
 In ev'ry cranny out the right
 Forth skipp'd the cat, not now replete
 As erst with airy self conceit,
 Nor in her own fond apprehension
 A theme for all the world's attention;
 But modest, sober, cur'd of all
 Her notions hyperbolical,
 And wishing for a place of rest
 Anything rather than a chest
 Then stepp'd the poet into bed
 With this reflection in his head,

MOBAL.

Beware of too sublime a sense
 Of your own worth and consequence
 The man who dreams himself so great,
 And his importance of such weight,
 That all around, in all that's done,
 Must move and act for him alone,
 Will learn in school of tribulation
 The folly of his expectation

YARDLEY OAK

[We owe to Harley the discovery of this noble fragment. He came suddenly up on it—"a loose half quire of large quarto paper"—amid a heap of discarded note books and blotted manuscript, he tells us that he could hardly have been more surprised, if an oak, "in its natural majesty, had started up from the turf of the garden, with full foliage," before him. The walk to this hill was a great favourite with Cowper, though it was five miles at least from Weston Lodge. Mr Howitt, who visited the spot in 1816, has given a graphic account of the scenery—"In traversing the park, to reach the woods and Yardley Oak, we come into a genuinely agricultural region, swelling rounded eminences, with little valleys winding between them, here and there a farm house of the most rustic description, the plough and its whistling followers turning up the ruddy soil. The vast extent of the forest which stretches before you, gives a deep feeling of solitude and ancient repose. You descend into a valley, and Kilnwick's hoing wood spreads itself before you on the upland. You pass through it, and come out opposite to a lonely farm house, where, in the opening of the forest, you see the remains of very ancient oaks standing here and there, and amid these venerable trees you soon see the one which, by its bulk, its hollow trunk, and its lopped and dilapidated crown, need not be pointed out as the Yardley Oak." In Cowper's memorandum, the girth of the Yardley Oak is stated to be twenty two feet six and a half inches, stepping round it at the foot, it appeared to Mr Howitt to be above thirteen yards in circumference. Yardley Chase is the property of Lord Northampton, and an inscription on a board admonishes all pil-

ferers to respect the poetical relic The lines were written in 1791
 Cowper produced no strain of a higher or a happier mood, and the
 grace and finish of the language are worthy of the thoughts]

SURVIVOR sole, and hardly such, of all
 That once liv'd here, thy brethren, at my birth,
 (Since which I number threescore winters past)
 A shatter'd vet'ran, hollow trunk'd perhaps,
 As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
 Relics of ages! could a mind, imbued
 With truth from Heaven, created thing adore,
 I might with reverence kneel, and worship thee.

It seems idolatry with some excuse,
 When our forefather Druids in their oaks
 Imagined sanctity The conscience, yet
 Unpurified by an authentic act
 Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
 Lov'd not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
 Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
 Of fruit proscribed, as to a refuge, fled.

Thou wast a bauble once, a cup and ball,
 Which babes might play with, and the thievish jay,
 Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
 The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
 Thy yet close folded latitude of boughs
 And all thine embryo vastness at a gulp.
 But late thy growth decreed, autumnal rains
 Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil
 Design'd thy cradle, and a skipping deer,
 With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepared
 The soft receptacle, in which, secure,
 Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.

So Fancy dreams Disprove it, if ye can,
 Ye reas'ners broad awake, whose busy search
 Of argument, employ'd too oft amiss,
 Sifts half the pleasures of short life away!

Thou fell'st mature, and in the loamy clod,
 Swelling with vegetative force instinct,
 Did burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled Twins,
 Now stars, two lobes, protruding, pair'd exact,
 A leaf succeeded, and another leaf
 And, all the elements thy puny growth
 For'ring propitious, thou becam'st a twig

Who lived, when thou wast such? Oh, couldst
 thou speak,
 As in Dodona once thy kindred trees
 Oracular, I would not curious ask
 The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth
 Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past

By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
 The clock of history, facts and events
 Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts
 Recovering, and misstated setting right—
 Desperate attempt, till trees shall speak again!

Time made thee what thou wast, king of the woods;
 And Time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
 For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs
 O'erhung the champaign, and the num'rous flocks
 That grazed it, stood beneath that ample cope
 Unerowded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm
 No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast outlived
 Thy popularity, and art become
 (Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
 Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth

While thus through all the stages thou hast push'd
 Of treeship—first a seedling, hid in grass,
 Then twig, then sapling, and, as cent'ry roll'd
 Slow after century, a giant-bulk
 Of girth enormous, with moss cushion'd root
 Uplifted above the soil, and sides emboss'd
 With prominent wens globose—till at the last
 The rottenness, which time is charged to inflict
 On other mighty ones, found also thee

What exhibitions various hath the world
 Witness'd of mutability in all
 That we account most durable below!
 Change is the diet on which all subsist,
 Created changeable, and change at last
 Destroys them. Skies uncertain now the heat
 Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam
 Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds—
 Calm and alternate storm, moisture and drought,
 Invigorate by turns the springs of life
 In all that live, plant, animal, and man,

And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,
 Fine passing thought o'en in her coarsest works,
 Delight in agitation, yet sustain,
 The force that agitates, not unimpair'd;
 But, worn by frequent impulse, to the cause
 Of their best tone their dissolution owe

Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still
 The great and little of thy lot, thy growth
 From almost nullity into a state
 Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,
 Slow, into such magnificent decay
 'Time was, when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
 Could shake thee to thy root—and time has been
 When tempests could not At thy firmest age
 Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents,
 That might have ribb'd the sides and plank'd the
 deck

Of some flagg'd admiral, and tortuous arms,
 The shipwright's darling treasure, didst present
 To the four quarter'd winds, robust and bold,
 Warp'd into tough knee timber, many a load¹
 But the axe spared thee In those thriffter days
 Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands to supply
 The bottomless demands of contest, waged
 For senatorial honours Thus to time
 The task was left to whittle thee away
 With his sly scythe, whose ever-nibbling edge,
 Noiseless, an atom, and an atom more,
 Disjoining from the rest has, unobserved,
 Achieved a labour, which had far and wide,
 By man perform'd, made all the forest ring

Embowell'd now, and of thy ancient self
 Possessing nought but the scoop'd rind, that seem'd
 A huge throat calling to the clouds for drink,
 Which it would give in rivulets to thy root,
 Thou temptest none, but rather much forbidd'st
 The feller's toil, which thou could'st ill requite.
 Yet is thy root succero, sound as the rock,
 A quarry of stout spurs, and knotted fangs,
 Which, crook'd into a thousand whimsies, clasp
 The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect.

¹ Knee-timber is found in the crooked arms of oak which, by reason of their distortion, are easily adjusted to the angle formed where the deck and the ship's sides meet —C

So stands a kingdom whose foundation yet
Fails not, in virtue and in wisdom laid,
Though all the superstructure, by the tooth
Pulverized of venality, a shell
Stands now, and semblance only of itself!

Thine arms have left thee Winds have rent them out
Long since, and rovers of the forest wild,
With bow and shaft, have burnt them Some have left
A splinter'd stump, bleach'd to a snowy white,
And some, memorial none where once they grew.
But life still lingers in thee, and puts forth
Proof not contemptible of what she can,
Even where death predominates The spring
Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force,
Than yonder upstarts of the neighb'ring wood,
So much thy juniors, who their birth received
Half a millennium since the date of thine

But since, although well qualified by age
To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice
May be expected from thee, seated here
On thy distorted root, with hearers none
Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform
Myself the oracle, and will discourse
In my own ear such matter as I may.

One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman, never gazed,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him, learn'd not by degrees,
Nor owed articulation to his ear,
But, moulded by his Maker into man,
At once upstood intelligent, survey'd
All creatures, with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heav'n
In praise harmonious the first air he drew
He was excused the penalties of dull
Minority No tutor charged his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind
With problems History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow watching Time, whose course,
Eventful, should supply her with a theme

TO THE NIGHTINGALE,

WHICH THE AUTHOR HEARD SING ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1792.

WHENCE is it that, amazed I hear,
 From yonder wither'd spray,
 This foremost morn of all the year,
 The melody of May?

And why, since thousands would be proud
 Of such a favour shown,
 Am I selected from the crowd,
 To witness it alone?

Sing'st thou, sweet Philomel, to me,
 For that I also long
 Have practised in the groves like thee,
 Though not like thee in song?

Or sing'st thou rather under force
 Of some divine command,
 Commission'd to presage a course
 Of happier days at hand?

Thrice welcome then! for many a lon
 An joyless year have I,
 As thou to day, put forth my song
 Beneath a wintry sky

But thee no wintry skies can harm,
 Who only need'st to sing,
 To make ev'n January charm,
 And ev'ry season Spring

¹ "You talk of primroses, that you pulled on Candlemas Day; but what think you of me, who heard a Nightingale on New Year's Day? Perhaps I am the only man in England who can boast of such good fortune" — (to John Johnson, March 11, 1792)

LINES

WRITTEN FOR INSERTION IN A COLLECTION OF HANDWRITINGS AND
SIGNATURES MADE BY MISS PATTY, SISTER OF HANNAH MORE.

In vain to live from age to age
While modern birds endeavour,
I write my name in Patty's page,
And gain my point for ever

W. COWPER

EPITAPH

ON A TREE BUT TAME BEDDREAST, A FAVOURITE OF
MISS SALLY HURDIS¹

These are not dew-drops, these are tears,
And tears by Sally shed,
For absent Robin, who sh'ld fear,
With too much cause, is dead

One morn he came not to her hand,
As he was wont to come,
And, on her finger perch'd, to stand
Picking his breakfast-crumbs

Alarm'd she call'd him, and perplex'd
She sought him, but in vain,
That day he came not, nor the next,
Nor ever came again

She therefore raised him here a tomb,
Though where he fell, or how,
None knows, so secret was his doom,
Nor where he moulders now

Had half a score of covecombs died
In social Robin's stead,
Poor Sally's tears had soon been dried,
Or haply never shed

¹ "Here are two nice damsels, not young but of easy, elegant manners, expected every moment in the turret, and for them you must exert your humanity. This you will doubtless be ready to do when I tell you they are two interesting sisters of Cowper's friend, poor Hurdis,—his sisters Eliza and Sally. Sally, you know, was his model for Cecilia, in his play of *Sir Thomas More*."—HAYLEY TO JOHN JOHNSON, March 6, 1807. (Life of Hayley, ii. 128.)

But Bob was neither ready bo'd
 Nor sportively tame.
 Not vain like theirs, his bosom cold
 But always in a flame.

SONNET TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ

Thy country, Wilberforce, with just disdain
 Hears thee by cruel men and many call'd
 Fanatic, for thy zeal to loose the enthral'd
 From exile public sale and slavery's chain.
 Friend of the poor, the wrong'd, the father-guilt'd,
 Fear not lost labour such as thine be vain
 Thou hast achieved a part, hast gain'd the ear
 Of Britain's senate to thy glorious cause:
 Hope smiles, joy springs, and though we'd caution
 pause
 And weave delay, the better hour is near
 That shall remunerate thy toils severe
 By peace for Afric, freed from British lava.
 Enjoy what thou hast won, esteem and love
 From all the Just on earth, and all the Bless'd above.

TO DR. AUSTIN, OF CECIL STREET, LONDON

AUSTIN! accept a grateful verse from me,
 The poet's treasure, no ambitious fee
 Lov'd by the Muses. My ingenuous mind
 Pleasing requital in my verse may find,
 Verse o't has dash'd the scythe of Time aside,
 Immortalizing names which else had died.
 And oh! could I command the glittering wealth
 With which such kings are glad to purchase health,
 Yet, if extensive fame, and sure to live,
 Were in the power of verse like mine to give,
 I would not recompense his art with less,
 Who, giving Mary health, heals my distress.

Friend of my friend! I love thee, tho' unknown
 And boldly call thee, being he, my own.

My numbers that day she had sung,
 And gave them a grace so divine,
 As only her musical tongue
 Could infuse into numbers of mine
 The longer I heard, I esteemed
 The work of my fancy the more,
 And e'en to myself never seemed
 So tuneful a poet before

Though the pleasures of London exceed
 In number the days of the year,
 Catharina, did nothing impede,
 Would feel herself happier here,
 For the close woven arches of limes
 On the banks of our river, I know,
 Are sweeter to her many times
 Than aught that the city can show

So it is, when the mind is endued
 With a well judging taste from above
 Then, whether embellished or rude,
 'Tis nature alone that we love
 The achievements of art may amuse,
 May even our wonder excite,
 But groves, hills, and valleys diffuse
 A lasting, a sacred delight.

Since then in the rural recess
 Catharina alone can rejoice,
 May it still be her lot to possess
 The scene of her sensible choice!
 To inhabit a mansion remote
 From the clatter of street-pacing steeds,
 And by Philomel's annual note
 To measure the life that she leads

With her book, and her voice, and her lyre,
 To wing all her moments at home,
 And with scenes that new rapture inspire,
 As oft as it suits her to roam,
 She will have just the life she prefers,
 With little to hope or to fear,
 And ours would be pleasant as hers,
 Might we view her enjoying it here

CATHARINA:

THE SECOND PART.

ON HER MARRIAGE TO GEO COURTENAY, ESQ, JUNE, 1792

BELIEVE it or not, as you choose,
 The doctrine is certainly true,
 That the future is known to the muse,
 And poets are oracles too
 I did but express a desire,
 To see Catharina at home,
 At the side of my friend George's fire,
 And lo—she is actually come

Such prophecy some may despise,
 But the wish of a poet and friend
 Perhaps is approv'd in the skies,
 And therefore attains to its end
 'Twas a wish that flew ardently forth
 From a bosom effectually warm'd
 With the talents, the graces, and worth
 Of the person for whom it was form'd.

Maria¹ would leave us, I knew,
 To the grief and regret of us all,
 But less to our grief, could we view
 Catharina the Queen of the Hall;
 And therefore I wish'd as I did,
 And therefore this union of hands;
 Not a whisper was heard to forbid,
 But all cry—Amen—to the bans.

Since therefore I seem to incur
 No danger of wishing in vain,
 When making good wishes for her,
 I will e'en to my wishes again—
 With one I have made her a Wife,
 And now I will try with another,
 Which I cannot suppress for my life—
 How soon I can make her a Mother.

¹ Lady Throckmorton

AN EPITAPH. 1792.

HERE lies one who never drew
 Blood himself, yet many slew,
 Gave the gun its aim, and figure
 Made in field, yet ne'er pulled trigger;
 Armed men have gladly made
 Him their guide, and him obey'd;
 At his signified desire,
 Would advance, present, and fire—
 Stout he was, and large of limb,
 Scores have fled in spite of him
 And to all this fame he rose
 Only following his nose
 Neptune was he call'd, not he
 Who controls the boist'rous sea,
 But of happier command,
 Neptune of the furrow'd land,
 And, your wonder vain to shorten,
Pointer to Sir John Throckmorton

EPITAPH ON FOP,

A DOG BELONGING TO LADY THROCKMORTON

THOUGH once a puppy, and though Fop by name
 Here moulders one whose bones some honour claim
 No sycophant, although of spaniel race,
 And though no hound, a martyr to the chase—
 Ye squirrels, rabbits, leverets, rejoice,
 Your haunts no longer echo to his voice;
 This record of his fate exulting view,
 He died worn out with vain pursuit of you

"Yes—" the indignant shade of Fop replies—
 "And worn with vain pursuit Man also dies"

SONNET TO GEORGE ROMNEY, ESQ.,

ON HIS PICTURE OF ME IN CRAYONS,
DRAWN AT EARTHAM, IN THE SIXTY-FIRST YEAR OF MY AGE, AND
IN THE MONTHS OF AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER, 1792

ROMNEY, expert infallibly to trace
On chart or canvas, not the form alone
And semblance, but, however faintly shown,
The mind's impression too on every face—
With strokes that time ought never to erase
Thou hast so pencill'd mine, that though I own
The subject worthless, I have never known
The artist shining with superior grace
But thus I mark—that symptoms none of woe
In thy incomparable work appear
Well—I am satisfied it should be so,
Since, on maturer thought, the cause is clear,

For in my looks what sorrow couldst thou see
When I was Hayley's guest, and sat to Thee?

ON RECEIVING HAYLEY'S PICTURE

In language warm as could be breath'd or penn'd,
Thy picture speaks th' original my Friend,
Not by those looks that indicate thy mind,—
They only speak thee Friend of all mankind;
Expression here more soothing still I see,
That Friend of *all* a partial Friend to *me*

EPITAPH ON MR. CHESTER, OF CHICHELEY.

TEARS flow, and cease not, where the good man lies,
Till all who know him follow to the skies
Tears therefore fall where Chester's ashes sleep,
Him wife, friends, brothers, children, servants, weep—
And justly—few shall ever him transcend
As husband, parent, brother, master, friend.

ON A PLANT OF VIRGIN'S-BOWER,

DESIGNED TO COVER A GARDEN-SEAT.

THRIVE, gentle plant! and weave a bow'r
 For Mary and for me,
 And deck with many a splendid flow'r
 Thy foliage large and free

Thou cam'st from Earham, and wilt shade
 (If truly I divine)
 Some future day th' illustrious head
 Of him who made thee mine

Should Daphne show a jealous frown,
 And Envy seize the bay,
 Affirming none so fit to crown
 Such honour'd brows as thoy,

Thy cause with zeal we shall defend,
 And with convincing pow'r,
 For why should not the Virgin's Friend
 Be crown'd with Virgin's Bow'r?

TO MY COUSIN, ANNE BODHAM,

ON RECEIVING FROM HER A NETWORK PURSE, MADE BY
 HERSELF, MAY 4, 1793

My gentle Anne, whom heretofore,
 When I was young, and thou no more
 Than plaything for a nurse,
 I danced and fondled on my knee,
 A kitten both in size and glce,
 I thank thee for my purse

Gold pays the worth of all things here,
 But not of love,—that gem's too dear
 For richest rogues to win it;
 I, therefore, as a proof of love,
 Esteem thy present far above
 The best things kept within it

INSCRIPTION

FOR A HERMITAGE IN THE AUTHOR'S GARDEN, MAY 1793

THIS cabin, Mary, in my sight appears,
Built as it has been in our waning years,
A rest afforded to our weary feet,
Preliminary to—the last retreat.

TO MRS UNWIN

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heav'n as some have feign'd they drew
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, now
And undebased by praise of meaner things,
That ere through age or woo I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings
But thou hast little need There is a book
By Seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright,
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine

TO JOHN JOHNSON,

ON HIS PRESENTING ME WITH AN ANTIQUE DUST OF HOMER

KINSMAN beloved, and as a son, by me!
When I behold this fruit of thy regard,
The sculptured form of my old fav'rite bard,
I rev'rence feel for him, and love for thee
Joy too and grief Much joy that there should be
Wise men and learned, who grudge not to reward,
With some applause my bold attempt and hard,

Which others scorn critics by courtesy.
 The grief is this, that sunk in Homer's mine
 I lose my precious years, now soon to fail,
 Handling his gold, which howsoe'er it shine,
 Proves dross, when balanced in the Christian scale.
 Be wiser thou—like our forefather Donne,¹
 Seek heavenly wealth, and work for God alone

TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

ON HIS ARRIVING AT CAMBRIDGE WET, WHEN NO RAIN
 HAD FALLEN THERE

If Gideon's² fleece, which drench'd with dew he found,
 While moisture none refresh'd the herbs around,
 Might fitly represent the Church, endow'd
 With heav'nly gifts, to heathens not allow'd,
 In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,
 Thy locks were wet when others' locks were dry.
 Heav'n grant us half the omen—may we see
 Not drought on others, but much dew on thee!

A T A L E

In Scotland's realm, where trees are few,
 Nor even shrubs abound,
 But where, however bleak the view,
 Some better things are found,

For husband there and wife may boast
 Their union undefiled,
 And false ones are as rare almost
 As hedge-rows in the wild;

In Scotland's realm forlorn and bare
 The hist'ry chanced of late—
 Thus hist'ry of a wedded pair,
 A chaffinch and his mate

¹ The maiden name of Cowper's mother was Anne Donne, a descendant of the famous Dean of St Paul's whose name and deserts, is the remark of Southey; 'if his own works were forgotten would be preserved by Frank Walton' Donne is in no danger of oblivion, while any lovers of learning and genius remain

² Judges vi 37, 38

The spring drew near, each felt a breast
 With genial instinct fill'd
 They pair'd, and would have built a nest,
 But found not where to build.

The heaths uncover'd and the moors,
 Except with snow and sleet,
 Sea-beaten rocks and naked shores,
 Could yield them no retreat

Long time a breeding-place they sought,
 Till both grew vex'd and tired,
 At length a ship arriving brought
 The good so long desired.

A ship?—could such a restless thing
 Afford them place of rest?
 Or was the merchant charged to bring
 The homeless birds a nest?

Hush—silent hearers profit most—
 Thus racer of the sea
 Proved kinder to them than the coast,
 It served them with a tree

But such a tree! 'twas shaven deal,
 The tree they call a mast,
 And had a hollow with a wheel
 Through which the tackle pass'd.

Within that cavity aloft
 Their roofless home they fix'd,
 Form'd with materials neat and soft,
 Bents, wool, and feathers mixt

Four iv'ry eggs soon pave its floor,
 With russet specks bedight—
 The vessel weighs, forsakes the shore,
 And lessens to the sight.

The mother bird is gone to sea,
 As she had changed her kind,
 But goes the male? Far wiser, he
 Is doubtless left behind?

No—Soon as from ashore he saw
 The winged mansion move,
 He flew to reach it, by a law
 Of never-failing love

Then perching at his consort's side,
 Was briskly borne along,
 The billows and the blast defied,
 And cheer'd her with a song

The seaman with sincere delight
 His feather'd shipmates eyes,
 Scarce less exulting in the sight
 Than when he tows a prize

For seamen much believe in signs,
 And from a chance so new
 Each some approaching good divines,
 And may his hopes be true!

Hail honour'd land! a desert where
 Not even birds can hide,
 Yet parent of this loving pair
 Whom nothing could divide.

And ye who, rather than resign
 Your matrimonial plan,
 Were not afraid to plough the brine
 In company with man;

For whose lean country much disdain
 We English often show,
 Yet from a richer nothing gain
 But wantonness and woe,

Be it your fortune, year by year,
 The same resource to prove,
 And may ye, sometimes landing here,
 Instruct us how to love!¹

¹ This tale is founded on an article of intelligence which the author found in the *Buckinghamshire Herald*, for Saturday, June 1, 1793, in the following words:—

“Glasgow, May 23

“In a block, or pulley, near the head of the mast of a gabert now lying at the Broomielaw, there is a chaffinch's nest and four eggs. The nest was built while the vessel lay at Greenock, and was followed hither by both birds. Though the block is occasionally lowered for the inspection of the curious, the birds have not forsaken the nest. The cock, however, visits the nest but seldom while the hen never leaves it but when she descends to the hall for

TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

DEAR architect of fine CHATEAUX in air,
 Worthier to stand for ever, if they could,
 Than any built of stone, or yet of wood,
 For back of royal elephant to bear!
 O for permission from the skies to share,
 Much to my own, though little to thy good,
 With thee (not subject to the jealous mood¹)
 A partnership of literary ware!
 But I am bankrupt now, and doom'd henceforth
 To drudge, in descant dry, on others' lays,
 Bards, I acknowledge, of unequall'd worth!
 But what is commentator's happiest praise?
 That he has furnish'd lights for other eyes,
 Which they, who need them, use, and then despise;

ON A SPANIEL CALLED BEAU KILLING
A YOUNG BIRD¹

A SPANIEL, Beau, that fares like you,
 Well-fed, and at his ease,
 Should wiser be than to pursue
 Each trifle that he sees
 But you have kill'd a tiny bird,
 Which flew not tall to-day,
 Against my orders, whom you heard
 Forbidding you the prey
 Nor did you kill that you might eat,
 And ease a doggish pain,
 For him, though chased with furious heat,
 You left where he was slain
 Nor was he of the thovish sort,
 Or one whom blood allures,
 But innocent was all his sport
 Whom you have torn for yours

¹ BEAU died of old age at the end of 1796, and was sent to London to be preserved in a glass case. Hayley, writing to the poet's kinsman, January 18, 1797, expresses a wish that an object, so interesting to the heart of Cowper, might "make a pleasing and salutary impression on his reviving fancy."

My dog! what remedy remains,
 Since, teach you all I can,
 I see you, after all my pains,
 So much resemble Man?

BEAU'S REPLY.

Sir, when I flew to seize the bird,
 In spite of your command,
 A louder voice than yours I heard,
 And braver to withstand

You cried—*forbear*—but in my breast
 A mightier cried—*proceed*—
 'Twas nature, Sir, whose strong behest
 Impell'd me to the deed

Yet much as nature I respect,
 I ventured once to break
 (As you perhaps may recollect)
 Her precept for your sake;

And when your linnet on a day,
 Passing his prison door,
 Had flutter'd all his strength away,
 And panting press'd the floor,

Well knowing him a sacred thing,
 Not destined to my tooth,
 I only kiss'd his ruffled wing,
 And lick'd the feathers smooth

Let my obedience then excuse
 My disobedience now,
 Nor some reproof yourself refuse
 From your aggrieved Bow-wow;

If killing birds be such a crime
 (Which I can hardly see),
 What think you, Sir, of killing time
 With verse address'd to me?

ANSWER TO STANZAS

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH, BY MISS CATHERINE FANSHAWE IN
RETURNING A POEM OF MR COWPER'S, LEFT TO HER, ON CONDITION
SHE SHOULD NEITHER SHOW IT, NOR TAKE A COPY

To be remember'd thus is fame,
And in the first degree,
And did the few like her the same,
The Press might sleep for me.

So Homer, in the mem'ry stored
Of many a Grecian belle,
Was once preserved—a richer hoard,
But never lodged so well.

TO THE SPANISH ADMIRAL COUNT GRAVINA

ON HIS TRANSLATING THE AUTHOR'S SONG ON A BUSH
INTO ITALIAN VERSE

My rose, Gravina, blooms anew,
And steep'd not now in rain,
But in Castalian streams by you,
Will never fade again

ON FLAXMAN'S PENELOPE¹

THE suitors sinn'd, but with a fair excuse,
Whom all this elegance might well seduce
Nor can our censure on the husband fall,
Who, for a wife so lovely, slew them all

¹ "I am glad that my poor and hasty attempts to express some little civility to Miss Fanshawe have your and her approbation. The lines addressed to her were not what I would have made them, but the lack of time would not suffer me to improve them. —(To Lady Hesketh, Aug 12, 1793.)

² "I am charmed with Flaxman's Penelope and will send you a few lines, such as they are, with which she inspired me, the other day, while I was taking my noonday walk. —(To Hayley, Sept 8, 1793.)

ON RECEIVING HEYNE'S VIRGIL FROM MR HAYLEY

I SHOULD have deem'd it once an effort vain
To sweeten more sweet Maro's matchless strain,
But from that error now behold me free,
Since I received him as a gift from thee.

TO MARY¹

THE twentieth year is well nigh past,
Since first our sky was overcast,
Ah would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a sunter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow—
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles once a shining store,
For my idle needles heretofore,
Now rust dross'd, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'st the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream,
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

¹ Written in the autumn of 1793 the last effort of his pen at Weston.
"The poem," remarks Hayley, "describes not his residence, but the increasing infirmities of his aged companion. I question if any language on earth can exhibit a specimen of verse more exquisitely tender."

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
 Are still more lovely in my sight
 Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
 What sight worth seeing could I see?
 The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
 Thy hands their little force resign,
 Yet gently prest, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st,
 That now at every step thou mov'st
 Upheld by two, yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary!

And still to love, though prest with ill,
 In wintry age to feel no chill,
 With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know,
 How oft the sadness that I show,
 Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
 With much resemblance of the past,
 Thy worn out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

MONTES GLACIALES,

IN OCEANO GERMANICO NATANTES, (MARCH 12, 1799)

EN, quæ prodigna, ex oris allata, remotis,
 Oras adveniunt pavescata per æquora nostras!
 Non equidem priscae sæculum rediisse videtur
 Pyrrhæ, cum Proteus pecus altos visere montes

Et sylvas, egit Sed tempora vix leviora
 Adsunt, evulsi quando radicibus alti
 In mare descendunt montes, sicutusque pererrat
 Quid verò hoc monstri est magis et mirabile visu?
 Splendentes video cum pulchro ex ære vel auro
 Conflatos, rutilosque ac velox undique gemmas,
 Brecâ ceruleâ, et flavinas imitante pyropo
 Ex oriente adsunt, ubi gemas optatas ellus
 Parturit omnigenas quibus æva per o rta surpta
 Ingenti flux re sibi diadematâ regas?
 Vix hoc crediderim Non fallit talia rector
 Merentorum oculos prima et quam litorea Gangis
 Liquissent, avidæ gratias nam pendula fuisse in
 Ortos unde puteris? An illos Vesuvius et ex
 Protulit, ignivomusque eiec t faucibus. Eum?
 Luce micant propria, Placuisse, per l'ra p' ruri
 Nunc stimulantis equos, argentea tota retorquent?
 Phœbi luce micant Ventis et fluctibus alius
 Appellâ, et rapidis subter currentibus undis,
 Tandem non fallit oculos Capita alta r dere est
 Multa onerata nive et can e cor sparsa pru nia
 Cætera sunt glaciæ Procul hinc, ubi Bæana ferè
 omnes

Contristat menses rortenta hinc Lorrâda nubis
 Illa strui voluit Quoties de culmine summo
 Chlorum fluere in littora prona, solutæ
 Sole, nives propero tendentes in mare cursu
 Illa gelu fixit Paalatim attollere scæ
 Mirum cæpit opus, gl'æ aque r b origine rerum
 In glaciem aggesti sublimem vertice tandem
 Aquavit montes non crescere ne cia molis
 Sic immensa diu stetit, æternumque stetit,
 Congerics, hominum neque vi neque mob hie ante,
 Littora ni tandem declivia deseruisset,
 Pondere victa suo Dilab tur Omnia circum
 Antra et saxa gemunt, subito concussa f'ig'ra,
 Cum ruit in pelagum, tanquam studiosa n' tendi,
 Ingens tota strues Sic Delos dicitur olim,
 Insula, in Egæo fluit isse erratica ponto
 Sed non ex glaciæ Delos, neque torpida Delum
 Bruna inter rupes genuit nudam sterilemq ue
 Sed vestita herbis erat illa, ornatæque nunquam
 Decidua lauro, et Delum dilexit Apollo
 At vos, erroneas horrendi, et caligine digni
 Cimmeria, Deus idem odit Natal a vestra,
 Nubibus involvens frontem, non ille tucri

*Sustinuit Patrium vos ergo requirite cælum !
 Ite ! Redite ! Timeate moras, ni lenitè austro
 Spirante, et nitidas Phœbo jaculante sagittas
 Hostili vobis, pereatis gurgite mista !*

ON THE ICE ISLANDS,

WHEN FLOATING IN THE GERMAN OCEAN, (MARCH 19, 1799)

WHAT portents, from what distant region, ride,
 Unseen till now in ours, th' astonish'd tide ?
 In ages past, old Proteus, with his droves
 Of sea-calves, sought the mountains and the groves
 But now, descending whence of late they stood,
 Themselves the mountains seem to rove the flood
 Dire times were they, full-charg'd with human woe,
 And these, scarce less calamitous than those
 What view we now ? More wondrous still ! Behold !
 Like burnish'd brass they shine, or beaten gold,
 And all around the pearl's pure splendour show,
 And all around the ruby's fiery glow
 Come they from India, where the burning Earth,
 All bounteous, gives her richest treasures birth,
 And where the costly gems, that beam around
 The brows of mightiest potentates, are found ?
 No Never such a countless dazzling store
 Had left, unseen, the Ganges' peopled shore
 Rapacious hands, and ever-watchful eyes,
 Should sooner far have mark'd and seiz'd the prize
 Whence sprang they then ? Ejected have they come
 From Ves'vius', or from Ætna's burning womb ?
 Thus shine they self-illum'd, or but display
 The borrow'd splendours of a cloudless day ?
 With borrow'd beams they shine The gales, that breathe
 Now landward, and the current's force beneath,
 Have borne them nearer and the nearer sight,
 Advantaged more, contemplates them aright
 Their lofty summits crested high, they show
 With mingled sleet, and long-incumbent snow,
 The rest is ice Far hence, where, most severe,
 Bleak Winter well nigh saddens all the year,
 Their infant growth began He bade arise
 Their uncouth forms, portentous in our eyes

Oft as dissolv'd by transient suns, the snow
 Left the tall cliff, to join the flood below,
 He caught, and curdled with a freezing blast
 The current, ere it reach'd the boundless waste
 By slow degrees uprose the wondrous pile,
 And long successive ages roll'd the while,
 Till, ceaseless in its growth, it claim'd to stand
 Tall as its rival mountains on the land
 Thus stood, and unremovable by skill,
 Or force of man, had stood the structure still;
 But that, though firmly fix'd, supplanted yet
 By pressure of its own enormous weight,
 It left the shelving bench—and, with a sound
 That shook the bellowing waves and rocks around
 Self launch'd, and swiftly, to the briny wave,
 As if instinct with strong desire to lave,
 Down went the pond'rous mass So bards of old,
 How Delos swam th' Ægean deep, have told
 But not of ice was Delos Delos bore
 Herb, fruit, and flow'rs She, crown'd with laurel, wore,
 Ev'n under wintry skies, a summer smile,
 And Delos was Apollo's fav'rite isle
 But, horrid wand'ers of the deep, to you
 He deems Cimmerian darkness only due
 Your hated birth he doign'd not to survey,
 But, mournful, turn'd his glorious eyes away—
 Hence! Seek your home, nor longer rashly dare
 The darts of Phœbus, and a softer air
 Lest ye regret, too late, your native coasts,
 In no congenial gulph for ever lost

ODE TO APOLLO.

ON AN INKGLASS ALMOST DRIED IN THE SUN.

PATRON of all those luckless brains
 That, to the wrong side leaning,
 Indite much metre with much pains,
 And little or no meaning,

Ah, why since oceans, rivers, streams,
 That water all the nations, —
 Pay tribute to thy glorious beams,
 In constant exhalations,

Why, stooping from the noon of day,
Too covetous of drink,
Apollo, hast thou stolen away
A poet's drop of ink!

Upborne into the viewless air,
It floats a vapour now,
Impelled through regions dense and rare,
By all the winds that blow,

Ordaigned perhaps ere summer flies,
Combined with millions more,
To form an iris in the skies,
Though black and foul before

Illustrious drop! and happy then
Beyond the happiest lot,
Of all that ever passed my pen,
So soon to be forgot!

Phœbus, if such be thy design,
To place it in thy bow,
Give wit, that what is left may shine
With equal grace below

THE FAITHFUL BIRD.

THE greenhouse is my summer seat,
My shrubs displaced from that retreat
Enjoyed the open air,
Two goldfinches, whose sprightly song
Had been their mutual solace long,
Lived happy prisoners there

They sang as blithe as finches sing
That flutter loose on golden wing,
And frolic where they list,
Strangers to liberty, 'tis true,
But that delight they never knew,
And therefore never missed.

But nature works in ev'ry breast,
With force not easily suppress'd.

And Dick felt some desires,
That, after many an effort vain,
Instructed him at length to gain
A pass between his wires

The open windows seemed t' invite
The freeman to a farewell flight,
But Tom was still confined,
And Dick, although his way was clear.
Was much too generous and sincere
To leave his friend behind

So settling on his cage, by play,
And chirp, and kiss, he seemed to say,
You must not live alone,—
Nor would he quit that chosen stand
Till I with slow and cautious hand,
Returned him to his own

O ye, who never taste the joys
Of Friendship, satisfied with noise,
Fandango, ball, and rout!
Blush when I tell you how a bud
A prison with a friend preferred
To liberty without

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION TO WILLIAM NORTHCOTE

Hic sepultus est
Inter suorum lacrymas
GULIELMUS NORTHCOT,
GULIELMI et MARIÆ filius
Unicus, unicé dilectus,
Qui floris ritu succisus est semibuantis,
Aprilis die septimo,
1780 Æt 10

Care, vale! Sed non æternum, care, valeto!
Namque iterum tecum, si modò dignus, ero.
Tum nihil amplexus poterit divellere nostros.
Neo tu marcesces, nec lacrymabor ero

TRANSLATION.

FAREWELL! "But not for ever," Hope replies,
 "Trace but his steps and meet him in the skies!
 There nothing shall renew our parting pain,
 Thou shalt not wither, nor I weep again."

THE POPLAR FIELD

THE poplars are felled, farewell to the shade,
 And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade!
 The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
 Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
 Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew:
 And now in the grass behold they are laid,
 And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade!

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
 Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
 And the scene where his melody charmed me before
 Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
 And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
 With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
 Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can
 To muse on the perishing pleasures of man,
 Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see
 Have a being less durable even than he

ON A MISTAKE IN THE TRANSLATION
OF HOMER.

COWPER had sinned with some excuse,
 If, bound in rhyming tethers,
 He had committed this abuse
 Of changing ewes for wethers.

But male for female is a trope,
 A rather bold misnomer,
 That would have startled even Pope,
 When he translated Homer¹

ON THE NEGLECT OF HOMER.

COULD Homer come himself, distressed and poor,
 And tune his harp at Rhedicina's door,
 The rich old vixen would exclaim, (I fear,)
 "Begone! no tramper gets a farthing here."

ON THE RECEIPT OF A HAMPER

(IN THE MANNER OF HOMER)

THE straw stuffed hamper with his ruthless steel
 He opened, cutting sheer the inserted cords,
 Which bound the lid and lip secure. Forth came
 The rustling package first, bright straw of wheat,
 Or oats, or barley, next a bottle green
 Throat-full, clear spirits the contents, distilled
 Drop after drop odorous, by the art
 Of the fair mother of his friend—the Rose

ON A MISCHIEVOUS BULL,

WHICH THE OWNER OF HIM SOLD AT THE AUTHOR'S INST

Go!—thou art all unfit to share
 The pleasures of this place
 With such as its old tenants are,
 Creatures of gentler race

¹ "I have heard about my wether mutton from various quarters. First from a sensible little man, curate of a neighbouring village, (the Rev John Buchanan), then from Walter Bagot, then from Henry Cowper; and now from you. It was a blunder hardly pardonable in a man who has lived amid fields and meadows, grazed by sheep, almost these thirty years. I have accordingly satirized myself in two stanzas which I composed last night, while I lay awake, tormented with pain, and well dosed with ludanum. If you find them not very brilliant, therefore, you will know how to account for it."—(To Hall April 16 1783)

The squirrel here his hoard provides,
Aware of wintry storms,
And woodpeckers explore the sides
Of rugged oaks for worms

The sheep here smooths the knotted thorn
With frictions of her fleece,
And here I wander eve and morn,
Like her, a friend to peace

Ah!—I could pity the exiled
From this secure retreat,—
I would not lose it to be styled
The happiest of the great.

But thou canst taste no calm delight,
Thy pleasure is to show
Thy magnanimity in fight,
Thy prowess,—therefore, go!

I care not whether east or north,
So I no more may find thee,
The angry Muse thus sings thee forth,
And elaps the gate behind thee

TO WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

BY AN OLD SCHOOLFELLOW OF HIS AT WESTMINSTER

HASTINGS! I knew thee young, and of a mind,
While young, humane, conversable, and kind,
Nor can I well believe thee, gentle then,
Now grown a villain, and the worst of men
But rather some suspect, who have oppressed
And worried thee, as not themselves the best

LINES ADDRESSED TO DR. DARWIN,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOTANIC GARDEN."

Two Poets¹ (poets by report
 Not oft so well agree,)
 Sweet harmonist of Flora's court!
 Conspire to honour thee

They best can judge a poet's worth,
 Who oft themselves have known
 The pangs of a poetic birth,
 By labours of their own

We therefore pleased extol thy song
 Though various yet complete,
 Rich in embellishment as strong,
 And learned as 'tis sweet

No envy mingles with our praise,
 Though, could our hearts repine
 At any poet's happier lays,
 They would—they must at thine

But we, in mutual bondage knit
 Of friendship's closest tie,
 Can gaze on even Darwin's wit
 With an unjaundiced eye

And deem the Bard, whoe'er he be,
 And howsoever known,
 Who would not twine a wreath for thee,
 Unworthy of his own

¹ The allusion is to Hayley, who contributed a poem upon the same author. It has been inconsiderately said, that Cowper's praise of Darwin was only the tribute of courtesy, but we learn from his comments upon the "Loves of the Plants, in the *Analytical Review*, that he perfectly appreciated the peculiar powers of the writer. He calls the "descriptions luminous as language selected with the finest taste can make them; and meeting 'the eye with a boldness of projection unattainable by any hand but that of a master;' and he particularly notices the beauty of the expression—the 'eye tips horns of the snail,' which an ordinary writer, he says, would not have attained in half a-dozen laboured couplets.

ON THE AUTHOR OF "LETTERS ON LITERATURE

THE Genius of th' Augustan age
 His head among Rome's ruins rear'd,
 And bursting with heroic rage,
 When literary Heron appear'd,
 "Thou hast," he cried, "like him of old,
 Who set the Ephesian dome on fire,
 By being scandalously bold,
 Attain'd the mark of thy desire.
 'And for traducing Virgil's name
 Shalt share his merited reward,
 A perpetuity of fame,
 That rots, and stinks, and is abhorred."

IN SEDITIONEM HORRENDAM,

CORRUPTELIS GALLICIS, UT FERTUR, LONDINI NUPER EXORTIAM.

PERFIDA, crudelis, victa et lymphata furore,
 Non armis, laurum Gallia fraude petit
 Venalem pretio plebem conduit, et urit
 Undique privatas patriciasque domos
 Nequicquam conata suâ, foedissima sperat
 Posse tamen nostrâ nos superare manu.
 Gallia, vana struis! Precibus nunc utere! Vinces
 Nam mites timidis, supplicibusque sumus

TRANSLATION

FALSE, cruel, disappointed, stung to the heart,
 France quits the warrior's for the assassin's part,
 To dirty hands a dirty bribe conveys,
 Bids the low street and lofty palace blaze

¹ The author was John Pinkerton. Cowper wrote of these letters with great indignation to Newton, Nov 5, 1785:—"What enterprises will not an inordinate passion for fame suggest? It prompted one man to fire the temple of Ephesus, another, to fling himself into a volcano, and now has induced this wicked and unfortunate squire either to deny his own feelings, or to publish to all the world that he has no feelings at all."

Her sons too weak to vanquish us alone,
 She hires the worst and basest of our own
 Kneel, France ! a suppliant conquers us with ease,
 We always spare a coward on his knees.

TO THE REV WILLIAM BULL.

June 23, 1782

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IF reading verse be your delight,
 'Tis mine as much, or more, to write,
 But what we would, so weak is man,
 Lies oft remote from what we can.
 For instance, at this very time
 I feel a wish by cheerful rhyme
 To soothe my friend, and, had I power,
 To cheat him of an anxious hour,
 Not meaning (for I must confess,
 It were but folly to suppress)
 His pleasure or his good alone,
 But squinting partly at my own
 But though the sun is flaming high
 In the centre of yon arch, the sky,
 And he had once (and who but he?)
 The name for setting genius free,
 Yet whether poets of past days
 Yielded him undeserved praise,
 And he by no uncommon lot
 Was famed for virtues he had not,
 Or whether, which is like enough,
 His Highness may have taken huff,
 So seldom sought with invocation,
 Since it has been the reigning fashion
 To disregard his inspiration,
 I seem no brighter in my wits,
 For all the radiance he emits,
 Than if I saw, through midnight vapour,
 The glimmering of a farthing taper
 Oh for a succedaneum, then,
 T' accelerate a creeping pen !
 Oh for a ready succedaneum,
 Quod caput, cerebrum, et cranium

Pondere liberet exoso,
Et morbo jam caliginoso!
'Tis here, this oval box well filled
With best tobacco, finely milled,
Beats all Antieyra's pretences
To disengage the encumbered senses
Oh Nymph of transatlantic fame,
Where'er thy haunt, whate'er thy name,
Whether reposing on the side
Of Oroonquo's spacious tide,
Or listening with delight not small
To Niagara's distant fall,
'Tis thine to cherish and to feed
The pungent nose refreshing weed,
Which, whether pulverised it gain
A speedy passage to the brain,
Or whether, touched with fire, it rise
In circling eddies to the skies,
Does thought more quicken and refine
Than all the breath of all the Nine—
Forgive the bard, if hard he be,
Who once too wantonly made free,
To touch with a satiric wipe
That symbol of thy power, the pipe,
So may no blight infect thy plains,
And no unseasonable rains,
And so may smiling peace once more
Visit America's sad shore,
And thou, secure from all alarms,
Of thundering drums and glittering arms,
Rove unconfined beneath the shade
Thy wide expanded leaves have made,
So may thy votaries increase,
And fumigation never cease
May Newton with renewed delights
Perform thy odouriferous rites,
While clouds of incense half divine
Involve thy disappearing shrine,
And so may smoke-inhaling Bull
Be always filling, never full

VERSES PRINTED BY HIMSELF, ON A FLOOD
AT OLNEY, AUGUST 12, 1782

To watch the storms, and hear the sky
Give all our almanacks the lie,
To shake with cold, and see the plains
In autumn drowned with wintry rains,
'Tis thus I spend my moments here,
And wish myself a Dutch mynheer,
I then should have no need of wit,
For lumpish Hollander unfit!
Nor should I then repine at mud,
Or meadows deluged with a flood;
But in a bog live well content,
And find it just my element.
Should be a clod, and not a man,
Nor wish in vain for Sister Ann,
With charitable aid to drag
My mind out of its proper quag,
Should have the genius of a boor,
And no ambition to have more

4.

ANTI-THELYPHTHORA.

A TALE IN VERSE

Ah miser
Quanta laboras in Charybdi!
HORACE, lib. 1. ode 27

[This playful satire was recovered by Southey, who found it mentioned in a letter of Mr. Posa, which had been accidentally left as a marker in a volume of the "Biographia Britannica." It appeared in 1781, without the author's name. The poem is an attack upon a treatise, "Thelyphthora," written by Martin Madan, a popular preacher, and cousin of Cowper, in vindication of polygamy. The following is a pleasing specimen of the poet's lighter style.]

AIRY DEL CASTRO was as bold a knight
As ever earned a lady's love in fight
Many he sought, but one above the rest
His tender heart victoriously impressed;

In fairy land was born the matchless dame,
 The land of dreams, Hypothesis her name
 There Fancy nursed her in ideal bowers,
 And laid her soft in amaranthine flowers,
 Delighted with her babe, the enchantress smiled,
 And graced with all her gifts the favourite child
 Her wooed Sir Airy, by meandering streams,
 In daily musings and in nightly dreams,
 With all the flowers he found, he wove in haste
 Wreaths for her brow, and girdles for her waist;
 His time, his talents, and his ceaseless care
 All consecrated to adorn the fair,
 No pastime but with her he deigned to take,
 And,—if he studied, studied for her sake
 And, for Hypothesis was somewhat long,
 Nor soft enough to suit a lover's tongue,
 He called her Posy, with an amorous art,
 And graved it on a gem, and wore it next his heart.

But she, inconstant as the beams that play
 On rippling waters in an April day,
 With many a freakish trick deceived his pains,
 To pathless wilds and unfrequented plains
 Enticed him from his oaths of knighthood far,
 Forgetful of the glorious toils of war
 'Tis thus the tenderness that love inspires
 Too oft betrays the votaries of his fires,
 Borne far away on elevated wings,
 They sport like wanton doves in airy rings,
 And laws and duties are neglected things

Nor he alone addressed the wayward fair,
 Full many a knight had been entangled there
 But still, whoever wooed her or embraced,
 On every mind some mighty spell she cast,
 Some she would teach, (for she was wondrous wise,
 And made her dupes see all things with her eyes,)
 That forms material, whatsoe'er we dream,
 Are not at all, or are not what they seem,
 That substances and modes of every kind
 Are mere impressions on the passive mind,
 And he that splits his cranium, breaks at most
 A fancied head against a fancied post
 Others, that earth, ere sin had drowned it all
 Was smooth and even as an ivory ball,
 That all the various beauties we survey,
 Hills, valleys, rivers, and the boundless sea

Are but departures from the first design
 Effects of punishment and wrath divine
 She tutored some in Dædalus's art,
 And promised they should act his wildgoose part
 On waxen pinions soar without a fall,
 Swift as the proudest gander of them all.

But fate reserved Sir Airy to maintain
 The wildest project of her teeming brain,
 That wedlock is not rigorous as supposed,
 But man, within a wider pale enclosed,
 May rove at will, where appetite shall lead,
 Free as the lordly bull that ranges o'er the mead,
 That forms and rites are tricks of human law
 As idle as the chattering of a daw,
 That lewd incontinence and lawless rape,
 Are marriage in its true and proper shape,
 That man by faith and truth is made a slave,
 The ring a bauble, and the priest a knave

"Fair fall the deed" the knight exulting cried,
 "Now is the time to make the maid a bride!"

'Twas on the noon of an autumnal day,
 October light, but mild and fair as May,
 When scarlet fruits the russet hedge adorn,
 And floating films envelop every thorn,
 When gently, as in June, the rivers glide,
 And only miss the flowers that graced their side,
 The linnet twittered out his parting song,
 With many a chorister the woods among,
 On southern banks the ruminating sheep
 Lay snug and warm,—'twas summer's farewell peep
 Propitious to his fond intent there grew,
 An harbour near at hand of thickest yew,
 With many a boxen bush, close clipt between,
 And phylirea of a gilded green

But what old Chaucer's merry page befits,
 The chaster muse of modern days omits
 Suffice it then in decent terms to say,
 She saw,—and turned her rosy cheek away
 Small need of prayer-book or of priest, I ween,
 Where parties are agreed, retired the scene,
 Occasion prompt, and appetite so keen.
 Hypothesis (for with such magic power
 Fancy endued her in her natal hour,)
 From many a steaming lake and reeking bog,
 Bade rise in haste a dank and drizzling fog,

That curtained round the scene where they reposed.
And wood and lawn in dusky folds enclosed.

I ear seized the trembling sex, in every grove
They wept the wrongs of honourable love,
In vain they cried, are hymeneal rites,
Vain our delusive hope of constant knights,
The marriage bond has lost its power to bind,
And flutters loose the sport of every wind
The bride, while yet her bride's attire is on,
Shall mourn her absent lord, for he is gone,
Satiate of her, and weary of the same,
'To distant wilds in quest of other game
To fair Circassians! all your lutes employ,
Seraglios sing, and harems dance for joy!¹
For British nymphs whose lords were lately true,
Nymphs quite as fair, and happier once than you,
Honour, esteem, and confidence forgot,
Feel all the meanness of your slavish lot
Oh cursed Hypothesis! your hellish arts
Seduce our husbands, and estrange their hearts —
Will none arise? no knight who still retains
The blood of ancient worthies in his veins,
To assert the charter of the chaste and fair,
Find out her treacherous heart, and plant a dagger there!
A knight--(can he that serves the fair do less?)
Starts at the call of beauty in distress,
And he that does not, whatsoe'er occurs,
Is recreant, and unworthy of his spurs!¹

Full many a champion, bent on hardy deed,
Called for his arms and for his princely steed
So swarmed the Sabine youth, and grasped the shield,
When Roman rapine, by no laws withheld,
Lest Rome should end with her first founders' lives,
Made half their maids, *sans* ceremony, wives
But not the mitred few, the soul their charge,
They left these bodily concerns at large,
Forms or no forms, pluralities or pairs,
Right reverend sirs!¹ was no concern of theirs
The rest, alert and active as became
A courteous knighthood, caught the generous flame
One was accoutred when the cry began,
Knight of the Silver Moon, Sir Marmadan²

¹ When a knight was degraded, his spurs were chopped off — C.

² Monthly Review for October — C

Oft as his patroness, who rules the night,
 Hangs out her lamp in yon carulean height,
 His vow was, (and he well performed his vow,)
 Armed at all points, with terror on his brow,
 To judge the land, to purge atrocious crimes,
 And quell the shapeless monsters of the times
 For cedars fumed, fair Lebanon supplied
 The well poised lance that quivered at his side
 Truth armed it with a point so keen, so just,
 No spell or charm was proof against the thrust
 He couched it firm upon his puissant thigh,
 And darting through his helm an eagle's eye,
 On all the wings of chivalry advanced
 To where the fond Sir Airy lay entranced

He dreamt not of a foe, or if his fear
 Foretold one, dreamt not of a foe so near
 Far other dreams his feverish mind employed,
 Of rights restored, variety enjoyed;
 Of virtue too well fenced to fear a flaw;
 Vice passing current by the stamp of law;
 Large population on a liberal plan,
 And woman trembling at the foot of man,
 How simple wedlock fornication works,
 And Christians marrying may convert the Turks

The trumpet now spoke Marmadan at hand,
 A trumpet that was heard through all the land
 His high bred steed expands his nostrils wide,
 And snorts aloud to cast the mist aside,
 But he the virtues of his lance to show,
 Struck thrice the point upon his saddle bow;
 Three sparks ensued that chased it all away,
 And set the unseemly pair in open day
 "To horse," he cried, "or, by this good right hand
 And better spear, I smite you where you stand."

Sir Airy, not a whit dismayed or scared,
 Buckled his helm, and to his steed repaired,
 Whose bridle, while he cropped the grass below,
 Hung not far off upon a myrtle bough

* 1 On this line, Southey remarks—"This is one of the instances in which Cowper's remembrance of a passage in Milton has betrayed him into an inexact use of a word in it—

—"Ho through the armed files
 Darts his experienced eye

PAR. LOOT, l. 569

I am quite unable to discover the incorrectness specified. The knight darting his eye through the bars of his helmet is surely in harmony with the trappings of chivalry, and the expression is clear and distinct

He mounts at once,—such confidence infused
 The insidious witch that had his wits abused,
 And she, regardless of her softer kind,
 Seized fast the saddle and sprang up behind
 “Oh shame to knighthood!” his assailant cried,
 “Oh shame!” ten thousand echoing nymphs replied.
 Placed with advantage at his listening ear,
 She whispered still that he had nought to fear,
 That he was cased in such enchanted steel,
 So polished and compact from head to heel,
 “Come ten, come twenty, should an army call
 Thee to the field, thou shouldst withstand them all”

“By Dian’s beams,” Sir Marmadan exclaimed,
 “The guiltless still are ever least ashamed!
 But guard thee well, expect no feign’d attack,
 And guard beside the sorceress at thy back!”

He spoke indignant, and his spurs applied,
 Though little need, to his good palfrey’s side
 The barb sprang forward, and his lord, whose force
 Was equal to the swiftness of his horse,
 Rushed with a whirlwind’s fury on the foe,
 And, Phineas¹ like, transfix’d them at a blow

Then sang the married and the maiden throng,
 Love graced the theme, and harmony the song,
 The Fauns and Satyrs, a lascivious race,
 Shrieked at the sight, and, conscious, fled the place
 And Hymen, trimming his dim torch anew,
 His snowy mantle o’er his shoulders threw,
 He turned, and viewed it oft on every side,
 And reddening with a just and generous pride,
 Blessed the glad beams of that propitious day,
 The spot he loathed so much for ever cleansed away

ON THE HIGH PRICE OF FISH

COCOA-NUT naught,
 Fish too dear,
 None must be bought
 For us that are here

No lobster on earth,
 That ever I saw,
 To me would be worth
 Sixpence a claw

So, dear Madam, wait
 Till fish can be got
 At a reasonable rate,
 Whether lobster or not;

Till the French and the Dutch
 Have quitted the seas,
 And then send as much
 And as oft as you please.

TO MRS NEWTON

A NOBLE theme demands a noble verse
 In such I thank you for your fine oysters,
 The barrel was magnificently large,
 But, being sent to Olney at free charge,
 Was not inserted in the driver's list,
 And therefore overlooked, forgot, or missed,
 For, when the messenger whom we despatch'd
 Inquired for oysters, Hob his noddle scratch'd;
 Denying that his waggon or his wain
 Did any such commodity contain
 In consequence of which, your welcome boon
 Did not arrive till yesterday at noon,
 In consequence of which some chanced to die,
 And some, though very sweet, were very dry
 Now Madam says, (and what she says must still
 Deserve attention, say she what she will,
 That what we call the Diligence, be case
 It goes to London with a swifter pace,
 Would better suit the carriage of your gift,
 Returning downward with a pace as swift,
 And therefore recommends it with this aim—
 To save at least three days,—the price the same,
 For though it will not carry or convey
 For less than twelve pence, send whate'er you may:
 For oysters bred upon the salt sea-shore,
 Packed in a barrel, they will charge no more

News have I none that I can deign to write,
 Save that it rained prodigiously last night,
 And that ourselves were, at the seventh hour,
 Caught in the first beginning of the shower,

But walking, running, and with much ado,
 Got home—just time enough to be wet through,
 Yet both are well, and, wondrous to be told,
 Soused as we were, we yet have caught no cold,
 And wishing just the same good hap to you,
 We say, good Madam, and good Sir, adieu!

MARY AND JOHN.

If John marries Mary, and Mary alone,
 'Tis a very good match between Mary and John
 Should John wed a score, oh the claws and the scratches!
 It can't be a match —'tis a bundle of matches

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

DEAR President, whose art sublime
 Gives perpetuity to time,
 And bids transactions of a day,
 That fleeting hours would waft away
 To dark futurity, survive,
 And in unfading beauty live,—
 You cannot with a grace decline
 A special mandate of the Nine—
 Yourself, whatever task you choose,
 So much indebted to the Muse

Thus say the sisterhood We come—
 Fix well your pallet on your thumb,
 Prepare the pencil and the tints—
 We come to furnish you with hints
 French disappointments, British glory,
 Must be the subject of the story

First strike a curve, a graceful bow,
 Then slope it to a point below,
 Your outline easy, airy, light,
 Filled up becomes a paper kite
 Let independence, sanguine, horrid,
 Blaze like a meteor in the forehead
 Beneath (but lay aside your graces)
 Draw six and-twenty rueful faces,
 Each with a staring, steadfast eye,
 Fixed on his great and good ally

France flies the kite—'tis on the wing—
 Britannia's lightning cuts the string.
 The wind that raised it, ere it ceases,
 Just rends it into thirteen pieces,
 Takes charge of every fluttering sheet,
 And lays them all at George's feet.
 Iberia, trembling from afar,
 Renounces the confederate war,
 Her efforts and her arts o'ercome,
 France calls her shatter'd navies home
 Repenting Holland learns to mourn
 The sacred treaties she has torn,
 Astonishment and awe profound
 Are stamp'd upon the nations round,
 Without one friend, above all foes,
 Britannia gives the world repose

TO THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF THE HALIBUT,
 ON WHICH I DINED THIS DAY, MONDAY, APRIL 26, 1784

WHERE hast thou floated, in what seas pursued
 Thy pastime? When wast thou an egg new spawn'd,
 Lost in the immensity of ocean's waste?
 Roar as they might, the overbearing winds
 That rocked the deep, thy cradle, thou wast safe—
 And in thy munnikin and embryo state,
 Attach'd to the firm leaf of some salt weed,
 Didst outlive tempests, such as wrung and rack'd
 The joints of many a stout and gallant bark,
 And whelmed them in the unexplor'd abyss
 Indebted to no magnet and no chart,
 Nor under guidance of the polar fire,
 Thou wast a voyager on many coasts,
 Grazing at large in meadows submarine,
 Where flat Batavia, just emerging, peeps
 Above the brine,—where Caledonia's rocks
 Beat back the surge,—and where Hibernia shoots
 Her wondrous causeway far into the main
 Wherever thou hast fed, thou little thought'st,
 And I not more, that I should feed on thee
 Peace, therefore, and good health, and much good fish,
 To him who sent thee! and success as oft
 As it descends into the billowy gulf,

To the same drag that caught thee!—Fair thee well!
 Thy lot thy brethren of the slimy fin
 Would envy, could they know that thou wast doomed
 To feed a bard, and to be praised in verse.

PAIRING TIME ANTICIPATED

A FABLE

I SHALL not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau¹
 If birds confabulate or no,
 'Tis clear that they were always able
 To hold discourse, at least in fable,
 And even the child who knows no better
 Than to interpret by the letter,
 A story of a cock and bull,
 Must have a most uncommon skull.

It chanced then on a winter's day
 But warm and bright and calm as May,
 The birds conceiving a design
 To forestall sweet St Valentine,
 In many an orchard, copse, and grove
 Assembled on affairs of love,
 And with much twitter and much chatter
 Began to agitate the matter
 At length a Bullfinch, who could boast
 More years and wisdom than the most,
 Entreated, opening wide his beak,
 A moment's liberty to speak,
 And silence publicly enjoined,
 Delivered briefly thus his mind

“My friends! be cautious how ye treat
 The subject upon which we meet,
 I fear we shall have winter yet”

A Finch, whose tongue knew no control,
 With golden wing and satin poll,
 A last year's bird, who no'er had tried
 What marriage means, thus pert replied

“Methinks the gentleman,” quoth she,
 “Opposite in the apple tree,

¹ It was one of the whimsical speculations of this philosopher, that all fables which ascribe reason and speech to animals should be withheld from children, as being only vehicles of deception. But what child was ever deceived by them, or can be, against the evidence of his senses?—()

By his good will would keep us single
 Till yonder heaven and earth shall mingle;
 Or (which is likelier to befall)
 Till death exterminate us all
 I marry without more ado,
 My dear Dick Redeap, what say you?"
 Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling, bridling,
 Turning short round, strutting, and sideling,
 Attested, glad, his approbation
 Of an immediate conjugation
 Their sentiments so well expressed,
 Influenced mightily the rest,
 All paired, and each pair built a nest

But though the birds were thus in haste,
 The leaves came on not quite so fast,
 And destiny, that sometimes bears
 An aspect stern on man's affairs,
 Not altogether smiled on theirs
 The wind, of late breathed gently forth,
 Now shifted east, and east by north,
 Bare trees and shrubs but ill, you know,
 Could shelter them from rain or snow
 Stepping into their nests, they paddled,
 Themselves were chilled, their eggs were addled,
 Soon every father bird and mother
 Grew quarrelsome, and pecked each other,
 Parted without the least regret,
 Except that they had ever met,
 And learned in future to be wiser
 Than to neglect a good adviser

MORAL

Misses! the tale that I relate
 This lesson seems to carry—
 Choose not alone a proper mate,
 But proper time to marry

 EPITAPH ON A HARE.

HERE lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue
 Nor swifter greyhound follow,
 Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew,
 Nor ear heard huntsman's halloo;

Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,
Who, nursed with tender care,
And to domestic bounds confined,
Was still a wild Jack hare

Though duly from my hand he took
His pittance every night,
He did it with a jealous look,
And, when he could, would bite.

His diet was of wheaten bread,
And milk, and oats, and straw,
Thistles, or lettuces instead,
With sand to scour his maw.

On twigs of hawthorn he regaled,
On pippin's russet peel,
And, when his juicy salads failed,
Sliced carrot pleased him well

A Turkey carpet was his lawn,
Whereon he loved to bound,
To skip and gambol like a fawn,
And swing his rump around

His frisking was at evening hours,
For then he lost his fear,
But most before approaching showers,
Or when a storm drew near

Eight years and five round rolling moons
He thus saw steal away,
Doing out all his idle noons,
And every night at play

I kept him for his humour's sake,
For he would oft beguile
My heart of thoughts that made it ache,
And force me to a smile

But now beneath his walnut shade
He finds his long last home,
And waits, in snug concealment laid,
Till gentler Puss shall come

He, still more agèd, feels the shocks
From which no care can save,
And, partner once of Tiney's box,
Must soon partake his grave

EPITAPHIUM ALTERUM

Hic etiam jacet,
 Qui totum novennium vixit,
 Puss
 Siste paulisper,
 Qui præteriturus es,
 Et tecum sic reputa—
 Hunc neque canis venaticus,
 Nec plumbum missile,
 Nec laqueus,
 Nec imbres nimii,
 Confecêre
 Tamen mortuus est—
 Et moriar ego

SONNET TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER
BIRTHDAY

DEEM not, sweet rose, that bloom'st 'midst many a
 thorn,
 Thy friend, though to a cloister's shade consigned,
 Can e'er forget the charms he left behind,
 Or pass unheeded this auspicious morn'
 In happier days to brighter prospects born,
 Oh tell thy thoughtless sex, the virtuous mind,
 Like thee, content in every state may find,
 And look on Folly's pageantry with scorn,
 To steer with nicest art betwixt the extreme
 Of idle mirth, and affectation coy,
 To blend good sense with elegance and ease;
 To bid Affliction's eye no longer stream;
 Is thine, best gift, the unfailing source of joy,
 The guide to pleasures which can never cease!

AN APOLOGY FOR NOT SHOWING HER WHAT I HAD WROTE

[These Poems were printed in 1825, the year following the death of the lady to whom they had been addressed. "To her credit," is the remark of the Editor, Mr. Croft, "she remained constant to him on whom she had placed her affections. Neither time nor absence could diminish her attachment. She preserved with the greatest care, for many years, the pleasing memorials of the beloved author, when, for reasons known only to herself, she sent them in a sealed packet to a lady (her particular friend) with directions not to be opened till after her decease." The "Della" of the *Alphar* is Theodora Jane Cooper, the second daughter of Ashley Cooper, and the cousin of the poet. The interest of the poems is chiefly egotistical, the traces of literary merit in some being so slight as to be nearly inappreciable by analysis. Johnson observes, in his life of Hammond, that he who courts his mistress with Roman imagery deserves to lose her, because fiction destroys passion. But Cooper's personal mythology does not extend beyond a nameless Della watching no sheep, and he shows few signs of the despairing shepherd. The first poem is dated "Catfield, July, 1752," and I find an affecting allusion to the place and its associations in Cooper's letter to Lady Hersketh, from Mundsley, forty six years afterwards (October 13, 1798). "Why is scenery like this," had almost said, why is the very scene, which many years since I could not contemplate without rapture, now become, at the best, an insipid wilderness to me! It neighbours nearly, and as nearly resembles the scenery of Catfield, but with what different perceptions does it present me!" Catfield was the residence of the brother of Cooper's mother.]

Din not my Muse (what can she less?)
Perceive her own unfortuness,
Could she by some well-chosen theme,
But hope to merit your esteem,
She would not thus conceal her lays
Ambitious to deserve your praise
But should my Della take offence,
And frown on her impertinence,

In silence, sorrowing and forlorn,
 Would the despairing trisler mourn,
 Curse her ill-tuned, unpleasing lute,
 Then sigh and sit for ever mute.
 In secret therefore let her lay,
 Squandering her idle notes away
 In secret as swan chants along,
 Cheerful and careless in her song,
 Nor heeds she whether harsh or clear,
 Free from each terror, every fear,
 From that, of all most dreaded, free,
 The terror of offending Thee

At the same place.

DELIA, the unkindest girl on earth,
 When I besought the fair,
 That favour of intrinsic worth,
 A ringlet of her hair,

Refused that instant to comply
 With my absurd request,
 For reasons she could specify,
 Some twenty score at least.

Trust me, my dear, however odd
 It may appear to say,
 I sought it merely to defraud
 Thy spoiler of his prey

Yet when its sister locks shall fade,
 As quickly fade they must,
 When all their beauties are decayed,
 Their gloss, their colour, lost—

Ah then! if haply to my share
 Some slender pittance fall,
 If I but gain one single hair.
 Nor age usurp them all,—

When you behold it still as sleek,
 As lovely to the view,
 As when it left thy snowy neck,—
 That Eden where it grew,—

Then shall my Delia's self declare
 That I professed the truth,
 And have preserved my little share
 In everlasting youth

At the same place

THIS evening, Delia, you and I
 Have managed most delightfully,
 For with a frown we parted,
 Having contrived some trifle that
 We both may be much troubled at,
 And sadly disconcerted

Yet well as each performed their part,
 We might perceive it was but art,
 And that we both intended
 To sacrifice a little ease,
 For all such petty flaws as these
 Are made but to be mended

You knew, dissembler! all the while,
 How sweet it was to reconcile
 After this heavy pelt,
 That we should gain by this allay
 When next we met, and laugh away
 The care we never felt

Happy! when we but seek to endure
 A little pain, then find a cure
 By double joy requested,
 For friendship, like a severed bone,
 Improves and joins a stronger tone
 When aptly reunited.

WRITTEN IN A QUARREL,

(THE DELIVERY OF IT PREVENTED BY A RECONCILIATION)

THINK, Delia, with what cruel haste
 Our fleeting pleasures move,
 Nor heedless thus in sorrow waste
 The moments due to love;

Be wise, my fair, and gently treat
These few that are our friends,
Think thus abused, what sad regret
Their speedy flight attends !

Sure in those eyes I loved so well,
And wished so long to see,
Anger I thought could never dwell,
Or anger aimed at me

No bold offence of mine I knew
Should e'er provoke your hate,
And, early taught to thank you true,
Still hoped a gentler fate

With kindness bless the present hour,
Or oh ! we meet in vain !
What can we do in absence more
Than suffer and complain ?

Fated to ills beyond redress,
We must endure our woe,
The days allowed us to possess,
'Tis madness to forego

THE SYMPTOMS OF LOVE

Would my Deba know if I love, let her take
My last thought at night, and the first when I wake,
When my prayers and best wishes preferred for her sake

Let her guess what I muse on, when rambling alone
I stride o'er the stubble each day with my gun,
Never ready to shoot till the covey is flown

Let her think what odd whimsies I have in my brain,
When I read one page over and over again,
And discover at last that I read it in vain.

Let her say why so fixed and so steady my look,
Without ever regarding the person who spoke,
Still affecting to laugh, without hearing the joke

Or why when with pleasure her praises I hear,
(That sweetest of melody sure to my ear,)
I attend, and at once inattentive appear

And lastly, when summoned to drink to my flame,
Let her guess why I never once mention her name,
Though herself and the woman I love are the same

SEE where the Thames, the purest stream
That wavers to the noon-day beam,
Divides the vale below,
While like a vein of liquid ore
His waves enrich the happy shore,
Still shining as they flow

Nor yet, my Delia, to the main
Runs the sweet tide without a stain,
Unsulled as it seems,
The nymphs of many a sable flood
Deform with streaks of oozy mud
The bosom of the Thames

Some idle rivulets that feed
And suckle every noisome weed,
A sandy bottom boast,
For ever bright, for ever clear,
The trifling shallow rills appear
In their own channel lost

Thus fares it with the human soul,
Where copious floods of passion roll,
By genuine love supplied,
Fair in itself the current shows,
But ah! a thousand anxious woes
Pollute the noble tide

These are emotions known to few,
For where at most a vapoury dew
Surrounds the tranquil heart,
Then as the triflers never prove
The glad excess of real love,
They never prove the smart

O then, my life, at last relent!
Though cruel the reproach I sent,
My sorrow was unfeigned
Your passion, had I loved you not,
You might have scorned, renounced, forgot,
And I had ne'er complained

While you indulge a groundless fear,
The imaginary woes you bear
Are real woes to me
But thou art kind, and good thou art,
Nor wilt, by wronging thine own heart,
Unjustly punish me.

How blessed the youth whom fate ordains
A kind relief from all his pains,
In some admired fair,
Whose tenderest wishes find expressed
Their own resemblance in her breast,
Exactly copied there!

What good soe'er the gods dispense,
The enjoyment of its influence
Still on her love depends;
Her love the shield that guards his heart,
Or wards the blow, or blunts the dart
That peevish Fortune sends

Thus, Delia, while thy love endures,
The flame my happy breast secures
From fortune's fickle power,
Change as she list, she may increase,
But not abate my happiness,
Confirmed by thee before

Thus while I share her smiles with thee,
Welcome, my love, shall ever be
The favours she bestows,
Yet not on those I found my bliss,
But in the noble ecstasies
The faithful bosom knows

And when she prunes her wings for flight
And flutters numbly from my sight,
Contented I resign
Whate'er she gave, thy love alone
I can securely call my own,
Happy while that is mine

Berkhampstead

Bid adieu, my sad heart, bid adieu to thy peace!
 Thy pleasure is past, and thy sorrows increase,
 See the shadows of evening how far they extend,
 And a long night is coming, that never may end,
 For the sun is now set that enlivened the scene,
 And an age must be past ere it rises again

Already deprived of its splendour and heat,
 I feel thee more slowly, more heavily beat,
 Perhaps overstrained with the quick pulse of pleasure,
 Thou art glad of this respite to beat at thy leisure,
 But the sigh of distress shall now weary thee more
 Than the flutter and tumult of passion before

The heart of a lover is never at rest,
 With joy overwhelmed, or with sorrow oppressed
 When Delia is near, all is ecstasy then,
 And I even forget I must lose her again
 When absent, as wretched as happy before,
 Despairing I cry, "I shall see her no more!"

 At Berkhamstead

WRITTEN AFTER LEAVING HER AT NEW BURNS

How quick the change from joy to woe!
 How chequered is our lot below!
 Seldom we view the prospect fair,
 Dark clouds of sorrow, pain, and care,
 (Some pleasing intervals between,)
 Scowl over more than half the scene
 Last week with Delia, gentle maid,
 Far hence in happier fields I strayed,
 While on her dear enchanting tongue
 Soft sounds of grateful welcome hung,
 For absence had withheld it long
 "Welcome, my long-lost love," she said,
 "E'er since our adverse fates decreed
 That we must part, and I must mourn
 Till once more blessed by thy return,
 Love, on whose influence I relied
 For all the transports I enjoyed,

Has played the cruel tyrant's part,
 And turned tormentor to my heart.
 But let me hold thee to my breast,
 Dear partner of my joy and rest,
 And not a pain, and not a fear,
 Or anxious doubt shall enter there "
 Happy, thought I, the favoured youth,
 Blessed with such undissembled truth !
 Five suns successive rose and set,
 And saw no monarch in his state,
 Wrapped in the blaze of majesty,
 So free from every care as I

Next day the scene was overcast,
 Such day till then I never passed,
 For on that day, relentless fate !
 Deha and I must separate
 Yet ere we looked our last farewell,
 From her dear lips thus comfort fell
 " Fear not that time, where'er we rove,
 Or absence, shall abate my love "
 And can I doubt, my charming maid,
 As unsincere what you have said ?
 Banished from thee to what I hate,
 Dull neighbours and insipid chat,
 No joy to cheer me, none in view,
 But the dear hope of meeting you,
 And that through passion's optic seen,
 With ages interposed between,
 Blessed with the kind support you give,
 'Tis by your promised truth I live,
 How deep my woes, how fierce my flame,
 You best may tell, who feel the same

ON HER ENDEAVOURING TO CONCEAL HER GRIEF AT PARTING

Ah ! wherefore should my weeping maid suppress
 Those gentle signs of undissembled woe ?
 When from soft love proceeds the deep distress,
 Ah ! why forbid the willing tears to flow ?

Since for my sake each dear translucent drop
Breaks forth, best witness of thy truth sincere,
My lips should drink the precious mixture up,
And, ere it falls, receive the trembling tear

Trust me, these symptoms of thy faithful heart,
In absence shall my dearest hope sustain,
Delia! since such thy sorrow that we part,
Such when we meet thy joy shall be again

Hard is that heart and unsubdued by love
That feels no pain, nor ever heaves a sigh,
Such hearts the fiercest passions only prove,
Or freeze in cold insensibility

Oh! then indulge thy grief, nor fear to tell
The gentle source from whence thy sorrows flow,
Nor think it weakness when we love to feel,
Nor think it weakness what we feel to show

Hope, like the short-lived ray that gleams awhile
Through wintry skies, upon the frozen waste,
Cheers e'en the face of misery to a smile,
But soon the momentary pleasure's past

How oft, my Delia, since our last farewell,
(Years that have rolled since that distressful hour,)
Grieved I have said, when most our hopes prevail,
Our promised happiness is least secure

Oft I have thought the scene of troubles closed,
And hoped once more to gaze upon your charms,
As oft some dire mischance has interposed,
And snatched the expected blessing from my arms

The seaman thus, his shattered vessel lost,
Still vainly strives to shun the threatening death,
And while he thinks to gain the friendly coast,
And drops his feet, and feels the sands beneath,

Borne by the wave steep sloping from the shore,
Back to the inclement deep, again he beats
The surge aside, and seems to tread secure,
And now the refluent wave his baffled toil defeats

Had you, my love, forbade me to pursue
 My fond attempt, disdainfully retired,
 And with proud scorn compelled me to subdue
 Th' ill-fated passion by yourself inspired,

Then haply to some distant spot removed,
 Hopeless to gain, unwilling to molest
 With fond entreaties whom I dearly loved,
 Despair or absence had redeemed my rest

But now, sole partner in my Delia's heart,
 Yet doomed far off in exile to complain,
 Eternal absence cannot ease my smart,
 And hope subsists but to prolong my pain.

Oh then, kind Heaven, be this my latest breath!
 Here end my life, or make it worth my care,
 Absence from whom we love is worse than death,
 And frustrate hope severer than despair.

R S S

ALL-WORSHIPPED Gold! thou mighty mystery!
 Say by what name shall I address thee, rather,
 Our blessing or our bane? Without thy aid,
 The generous pangs of pity but distress
 The human heart, that fain would feel the bliss
 Of blessing others, and, enslaved by thee,
 Far from relieving woes which others feel,
 Misers oppress themselves Our blessing then
 With virtue when possessed, without, our bane
 If in my bosom unperceived there lurk
 The deep sown seeds of avarice or ambition,
 Blame me, ye great ones, (for I scorn your censure,)
 But let the generous and the good commend me,
 That to my Delia I direct them all,
 The worthiest object of a virtuous love
 Oh! to some distant scene, a willing exile
 From the wild uproar of this busy world,
 Were it my fate with Delia to retire,
 With her to wander through the sylvan shade,
 Each morn, or o'er the moss-embrown'd turf,
 Where, bless'd as the prime parents of mankind
 In their own Eden, we would envy none,

But, greatly pitying whom the world calls happy,
 Gently spin out the silken thread of life,
 While from her lips attentive I receive
 The tenderest dictates of the purest flame,
 And from her eyes (where soft complacence sits
 Illumed with radiant beams of sense,)
 Tranquillity beyond a monarch's reach
 Forgive me, Heaven, this only avarice
 My soul indulges, I confess the crime,
 (If to esteem, to covet such perfection
 Be criminal) Oh grant me Delia! grant me wealth
 Wealth to alleviate, not increase my wants,
 And grant me virtue, without which nor wealth
 Nor Delia can avail to make me blessed

WRITTEN IN A FIT OF ILLNESS

R S S

In these sad hours, a prey to ceaseless pain,
 While feverish pulses leap in every vein,
 When each faint breath the last short effort seems
 Of life just parting from my feeble limbs,
 How wild so'er my wandering thoughts may be,
 Still, gentle Delia, still they turn on thee!
 At length if, slumbering to a short repose,
 A sweet oblivion frees me from my woes,
 Thy form appears, thy footsteps I pursue,
 Through springy vales, and meadows washed in dew;
 Thy arm supports me to the fountain's brink,
 Where by some secret power forbid to drink,
 Gasping with thirst, I view the tempting flood
 That flies my touch, or thickens into mud,
 Till thine own hand immersed the goblet dips,
 And bears it streaming to my burning lips
 There borne aloft on fancy's wing we fly,
 Like souls embodied to their native sky,
 Now every rock, each mountain disappears
 And the round earth an even surface wears,
 When lo! the force of some resistless weight
 Bears me straight down from that pernicious height,
 Parting, in vain our struggling arms we close,
 Abhorred forms, due phantoms interpose,

With trembling voice on thy loved name I call,
 And gulfs yawn ready to receive my fall
 From these fallacious visions of distress
 I wake, nor are my real sorrows less
 Thy absence, Delia, heightens every ill,
 And gives e'en trivial pains the power to kill
 Oh! wert thou near me, yet that wish forbear!
 'Twere vain my love,—'twere vain to wish thee near;
 Thy tender heart would heave with anguish too,
 And by partaking, but increase my woe
 Alone I'll grieve, till gloomy sorrow past,
 Health, like the cheerful day-spring, comes at last,—
 Comes fraught with bliss to banish every pain,
 Hope, joy, and peace, and Delia in her train!

TO DELIA, 1755

Me to whatever state the gods assign,
 Believe my love, whatever state be mine,
 Ne'er shall my breast one anxious sorrow know,
 Ne'er shall my heart confess a real woe,
 If to thy share Heaven's choicest blessings fall,
 As thou hast virtue to deserve them all
 Yet vain, alas! that idle hope would be
 That builds on happiness remote from thee
 Oh! may thy charms, whate'er our fate decrees,
 Please, as they must, but let them only please—
 Not like the sun with equal influence shine,
 Nor warm with transport any heart but mine
 Ye who from wealth th' ill grounded title boast
 To claim whatever beauty charms you most,
 Ye sons of fortune, who consult alone
 Her parent's will, regardless of her own,
 Know that a love like ours, a generous flame,
 No wealth can purchase, and no power reclaim
 The soul's affection can be only given
 Free, unextorted, as the grace of Heaven
 Is there whose faithful bosom can endure
 Pangs fierce as mine, nor ever hope a cure?
 Who sighs in absence of the dear loved maid,
 Nor summons once Indifference to his aid?
 Who can, like me, the nice resentment prove,
 The thousand soft disquietudes of love,

The trivial strifes that cause a real pain,
 The real bliss when reconciled again?
 Let him alone dispute the real prize,
 And read his sentence in my Delia's eyes,
 There shall he read all gentleness and truth,
 But not himself, the dear distinguished youth,
 Pity for him perhaps they may express—
 Pity that will but heighten his distress
 But, wretched rival! he must sigh to see
 The sprighther rays of love directed all to me
 And thou dear antidote of every pain
 Which fortune can inflict, or love ordain,
 Since early love has taught thee to despise
 What the world's worthless votaries only prize,
 Believe, my love! no less the generous god
 Rules in my breast, his ever blest abode,
 There has he driven each gross desire away,
 Directing every wish and every thought to thee!
 Then can I ever leave my Delia's arms,
 A slave devoted to inferior charms?
 Can e'er my soul her reason so disgrace?
 For what blest minister of heavenly race
 Would quit that Heaven to find a happier place?

DISAPPOINTMENT

DOOMED as I am, in solitude to waste
 The present moments, and regret the past,
 Deprived of every joy I valued most,
 My friend torn from me, and my mistress lost,
 Call not this gloom I wear, this anxious mien,
 The dull effect of humour or of spleen!
 Still, still I mourn, with each returning day,
 Him snatched by fate in early youth away,¹
 And her through tedious years of doubt and pain.
 Fixed in her choice and faithful—but in vain!
 Whose eye ne'er yet refused the wretch a tear,
 O prone to pity, generous, and sincere,
 Whose heart the real claim of friendship knows,
 Nor thinks a lover's are but fancied woes,
 See me—ere yet my destined course half done,
 Cast forth a wanderer on a world unknown!

¹ Sir William Russell, his companion at Westminster

See me neglected on the world's rude coast,
 Each dear companion of my voyage lost!
 Nor ask why clouds of sorrow shade my brow,
 And ready tears wait only leave to flow!
 Why all that soothes a heart from anguish free,
 All that delights the happy—palls with me!

O D E

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN ON THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND

THOU magic lyre, whose fascinating sound
 Seduced the savage monsters from their cave,
 Drew rocks and trees, and forms uncouth around,
 And bade wild Hebrus hush his listening wave,
 No more thy undulating warblings flow
 O'er Thracian wilds of everlasting snow!

Awake to sweeter sounds, thou magic lyre,
 And paint a lover's bliss—a lover's pain!
 Far nobler triumphs now thy notes inspire,
 For see, Eurydice attends thy strain,
 Her smile, a prize beyond the conjuror's aim,
 Superior to the cancelled breath of fame

From her sweet brow to chase the gloom of care,
 To check the tear that dims the beaming eye,
 To bid her heart the ringing sigh forbear,
 And flush her orient cheek with brighter joy,
 In that dear breast soft sympathy to move,
 And touch the springs of rapture and of love.

Ah me! how long bewildered and astray,
 Lost and benighted, did my footsteps rove
 Till sent by heaven to cheer my pathless ray,
 A star arose—the radiant star of love
 The god propitious joined our willing hands,
 And Hymen wreathed us in his rosy bands

Yet not the beaming eye, or placid brow,
 Or golden tresses, hid the subtle dart,
 To charms superior far than those I bow,
 And nobler worth enslaves my vanquished heart,
 The beauty, elegance, and grace combined,
 Which beam transcendant from that angel mind.

While vulgar passions, meteors of a day,
 Expire before the chilling blasts of age,
 Our holy flame with pure and steady ray,
 Its glooms shall brighten, and its pangs assuage;
 By Virtue (sacred vestal) fed, shall shine,
 And warm our fainting souls with energy divine

SONG

No more shall hapless Celia's ears
 Be fluttered with the cries
 Of lovers drowned in floods of tears,
 Or murdered by her eyes,
 No serenades to break her rest,
 Nor songs her slumbers to molest,
 With my fa, la, la

The fragrant flowers that once would bloom
 And flourish in her hair,
 Since she no longer breathes perfume
 Their odours to repair,
 Must fade, alas! and wither now,
 As placed on any common brow,
 With my fa, la, la

Her lip, so winning and so meek,
 No longer has its charms,
 As well she might by whistling seek
 To lure us to her arms,
 Affected once, 'tis real now,
 As her forsaken gums may show,
 With my fa, la, la.

The down that on her chin so smooth
 So lovely once appeared,
 That too has left her with her youth,
 Or sprouts into a beard,
 As fields, so green when newly sown,
 With stubble stiff are overgrown,
 With my fa, la, la.

Then, Celia, leave your apish tricks,
 And change your girlish airs,
 For ombre, snuff, and politics,
 Those joys that suit your years,
 No patches can lost youth recall,
 Nor whitewash prop a tumbling wall,
 With my fa, la, la.

AN ATTEMPT AT THE MANNER OF WALLER.

Drayton, March, 1753

DID not thy reason and thy sense,
 With most persuasive eloquence,
 Convince me that obedience due
 None may so justly claim as you,
 By right of beauty you would be
 Mistress o'er my heart and me

Then fear not I should e'er rebel,
 My gentle love! I might as well
 A forward peevishness put on,
 And quarrel with the mid-day sun:
 Or question who gave him a right
 To be so fiery and so bright

Say, thus were less absurd and vain
 Than disobedience to thy reign,
 His beams are often too severe,
 But thou art mild as thou art fair,
 First from necessity we own your sway,
 Then scorn our freedom, and by choice obey.

A SONG.

THE sparkling eye, the mantling cheek,
 The polished front, the snowy neck,
 How seldom we behold in one!
 Glossy locks, and brow serene,
 Venus' smiles, Diana's mien,
 All meet in you, and you alone

Beauty, like other powers, maintains
 Her empire, and by union reigns ,
 Each single feature faintly warms ,
 But where at once we view displayed
 Unblemished grace, the perfect maid
 Our eyes, our ears, our heart alarms

So when on earth the god of day
 Obliquely sheds his tempered ray,
 Through convex orbs the beams transmit,
 The beams that gently warmed before,
 Collected, gently warm no more,
 But glow with more prevailing heat

A SONG

On the green margin of the brook
 Despairing Phyllida reclined,
 Whilst every sigh, and every look,
 Declared the anguish of her mind.

Am I less lovely then ? (she cries,
 And in the waves her form surveyed ,)
 Oh yes, I see my languid eyes,
 My faded cheek, my colour fled ,
 These eyes no more like lightning pierced,
 These cheeks grew pale, when Damon first
 His Phyllida betrayed

The rose he in his bosom wore,
 How oft upon my breast was seen !
 And when I kissed the drooping flower,
 Behold, he cried, it blooms again !
 The wreaths that bound my braided hair,
 Himself next day was proud to wear
 At church, or on the green

While thus sad Phyllida lamented,
 Chance brought unlucky Thyrsis on :
 Unwillingly the nymph consented,
 But Damon first the cheat begun
 She wiped the fallen tears away,
 Then sighed and blushed, as who should say,
 Ah ! Thyrsis, I am won

UPON A VENERABLE RIVAL.

FULL thirty frosts since thou wert young
 Have chilled the withered grove,
 Thou wretch! and hast thou lived so long,
 Nor yet forgot to love!

Ye sages! spite of your pretences
 To wisdom, you must own
 Your folly frequently commences
 When you acknowledge none

Not that I deem it weak to love,
 Or folly to admire,
 But ah! the pangs we lovers prove
 Far other years require

Unheeded on the youthful brow
 The beams of Phœbus play,
 But unsupported age stoops low
 Beneath the sultry ray

For once, then, if untutored youth,
 Youth unapproved by years,
 May chance to deviate into truth,
 When your experience errs,

For once attempt not to despise
 What I esteem a rule,
 Who early loves, though young, is wise,—
 Who old, though grey, a fool

ON THE PICTURE OF A SLEEPING CHILD

FROM THE LATIN OF VINCENT BOURNE.

SWEET babe, whose image here expressed
 Does thy peaceful slumbers show,
 Guilt or fear, to break thy rest,
 Never di thy spirit know

Soothing slumbers, soft repose,
Such as mock the painter's skill,
Such as innocence bestows,
Harmless infant, lull thee still !

THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH.

MORTALS ! around your destined heads
Thick fly the shafts of Death,
And lo ! the savage spoiler spreads
A thousand toils beneath

In vain we trifle with our fate ,
Try every art in vain ,
At best we but prolong the date,
And lengthen out our pain

Fondly we think all danger fled,
For death is ever nigh ,
Outstrips our unavailing speed,
Or meets us as we fly

Thus the wrecked mariner may strive
Some desert shore to gain,
Secure of life, if he survive
The fury of the main

But there, to famine doomed a prey,
Finds the mistaken wretch,
He but escaped the troubled sea,
To perish on the beach

Since then in vain we strive to guard
Our frailty from the foe,
Lord, let me live not unprepared
To meet the fatal blow !

THE CASTAWAY.

OBSCUREST night involved the sky,
The Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain;
Nor him beheld, nor her again

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay,
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away,
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life

He shouted, nor his friends had failed
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevailed,
That pitiless perforce
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford;
And, such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delayed not to bestow
But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them,
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
 In ocean, self upheld
 And so long he, with unspent power,
 His destiny repelled
 And ever as the minutes flew,
 Untreated help, or cried—"Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
 His comrades, who before
 Had heard his voice in every blast,
 Could catch the sound no more
 For then, by toil subdued, he drank
 The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him, but the page
 Of narrative sincere,
 That tells his name, his worth, his age,
 Is wet with Anson's tear
 And tears by bards or heroes shed
 Alike immortalise the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
 Descanting on his fate,
 To give the melancholy theme
 A more enduring date
 But misery still delights to trace
 Its semblance in another's case

*No voice divine the storm allayed,
 No light propitious shone,
 When, snatched from all effectual aid,
 We perished, each alone
 But I, beneath a rougher sea,
 And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he¹*

¹ Written March 20, 1789; being the last original poem of the Author
 It is founded on a story in Anson's Voyage, which Cowper had not looked
 into for nearly twenty years

TRANSLATION OF DRYDEN'S EPIGRAM ON MILTON

"Three Poets in three distant ages born," &c

TRES tria, sed longè distantia, sæcula rates
Ostentant tribus è gentibus eximios
Græcia sublimem, cum majestate disertum
Roma tulit, felix Anglia utrique parem
Partibus ex binis Natura exhausta, coacta est,
Tertius ut fieret, consociare duos

TRANSLATION OF A SIMILE IN PARADISE LOST

"So when, from mountain tops, the dusky clouds
Ascending," &c

QUALES ærîi montis de vertice nubes
Cum surgunt, et jam Boreæ tumida ora quærunt,
Cælum hilares abdit, spissa caligine, vultus
Tum si jucundo tandem sol prodeat ore,
Et croceo montes et pascua lumine tingat,
Gaudent omnia, aves mulcent concentibus agris,
Balatuque ovium colles vallesque resurgent

TRANSLATIONS OF THE LATIN AND ITALIAN POEMS OF MILTON

ELFGY I.

TO CHARLES DEODATI

[It was during the lull which followed Cowper's Homeric labours, that the proposal came to him to translate the Latin and Italian poems of Milton. His veneration for the English author was only exceeded by that which he felt towards the Greek, and he embraced the offer with pleasure and hope. But the season was unfortunate. Sickness had visited Mrs. Unwin, and Cowper entered with her into the darkest shade. Often and often he complained of having been caught by this Miltonic trap, and though his disquiet was chiefly occasioned by the critical notes, the poetical portion of the task seems never to have worn a sunny look. His success was moderate. Miss Seward, in a letter to Southey, speaks of the "pedantic, tuneless, and spiritless look and sound" of the translations, and contrasts the version by Cowper with the sweet and touching composition which Langhorne formed of the Elegy on Damon. The defects did not grow of neglect. During Cowper's visit to Earham, the mornings were chiefly occupied with Hayley, in the revision of the translations. He spared no pains. "I give them," he told Hill, "all the varieties of measure that I can. Some I render in heroic rhyme, some in stanzas, some in seven, and some in eight syllable measure, and some in blank verse." The Sonnet beginning—

"As on a hill top rude, when closing day—"

is, I think, the happiest specimen. The translations were begun September, 1791, and finished in the March of the following year.]

At length, my friend, the far sent letters come,
Charged with thy kindness, to their destined home
They come, at length, from Deva's western side,
Where prone she seeks the salt Vergilian tide
Trust me, my joy is great that thou shouldst be,
Though born of foreign race, yet born for me,
And that my sprightly friend now free to roam,
Must seek again so soon his wonted home

I well content, where Thames with influent tide
My native city laves, meantime reside,
Nor zeal nor duty, now, my steps impel
To reedy Cam, and my forbidden cell
Nor aught of pleasure in those fields have I,
That, to the musing bard, all shade deny.
'Tis time, that I a pedant's threats disdain,
And fly from wrongs my soul will ne'er sustain
If peaceful days, in letter'd leisure spent,
Beneath my father's roof, be banishment,
Then call me banish'd, I will ne'er refuse
A name expressive of the lot I choose
I would, that, exiled to the Pontic shore,
Rome's hapless bard had suffer'd nothing more
He then had equall'd even Homer's lays,
And Virgil ' thou hadst won but second praise
For here I woo the muse, with no control,
And here my books—my life—absorb me whole
Here too I visit, or to smile, or weep,
The winding theatre's majestic sweep,
The grave or gay colloquial scene recruits
My spirits, spent in learning's long pursuits,
Whether some senior shrewd, or spendthrift heir,
Sutor or soldier, now unarm'd, be there,
Or some cou'd brooder o'er a ten years' cause,
Thunder the Norman gibb'rish of the laws
The lacquey, there, oft dupes the wary sire,
And, artful, speeds th' enamour'd son's desire
There, virgins oft, unconscious what they prove,
What love is know not, yet, unknowing, love
Or, if impassion'd Tragedy wield high
The bloody sceptre, give her locks to fly
Wild as the winds, and roll her haggard eye,
I gaze, and grieve, still cherishing my grief,
At times, e'en bitter tears! yield sweet relief.
As when from bliss untasted torn away,
Some youth dies, hapless on his bridal day,
Or when the ghost, sent back from shades below,
Fills the assassin's heart with vengeful woe,
When Troy, or Argos, the dire scene affords,
Or Creon's hall laments its guilty lords
Nor always city pent, or pent at home,
I dwell, but, when spring calls me forth to roam.
Expatiate in our proud suburban shades
Of branching elm, that never sun pervades.

Here many a virgin troop I may descry,
Like stars of mildest influence, gliding by
Oh forms divine! Oh looks that might inspire
E'en Jove himself, grown old, with young desire
Oft have I gazed on gem-surpassing eyes,
Out-sparkling every star that gilds the skies
Necks whiter than the ivory arm bestowed
By Jove on Pelops, or the milky road!
Bright locks, Love's golden snare! these fallen low,
Those playing wanton o'er the graceful brow!
Cheeks too, more winning sweet than after shower
Adonis turn'd to Flora's fav'rite flower!
Yield, heroines, yield, and ye who shar'd th' embrace
Of Jupiter in ancient times, give place!
Give place, ye turban'd fair of Persia's coast,
And ye, not less renown'd, Assyria's boast:
Submit, ye nymphs of Greece! ye, once the bloom
Of Ilion! and all ye, of haughty Rome,
Who swept, of old, her theatres with trains
Redundant, and still live in classic strains!
To British damsels beauty's palm is due,
Aliens! to follow them is fame for you
Oh city, founded by Dardanian hands,
Whose towering front the circling realms commands,
'Too blest abode! no loveliness we see
In all the earth, but it abounds in thee
The virgin multitude that daily meets,
Radiant with gold and beauty, in thy streets,
Out-numbers all her train of starry fires,
With which Diana gilds thy lofty spires
Fame says, that wasted hither by her doves,
With all her host of quiver-bearing loves,
Venus, preferring Paphian scenes no more,
Has fix'd her empire on thy nobler shore,
But lest the sightless boy enforce my stay,
I leave these happy walls, while yet I may.
Immortal Moly shall secure my heart
From all the sorcery of Circean art,
And I will o'en repass Cam's roedy pools
To face once more the warfare of the schools
Meantime accept this trifle! rhymes though few,
Yet such as prove thy friend's remembrance true!

ELEGY II.

ON THE DEATH OF THE UNIVERSITY BEADLE AT CAMBRIDGE.

Composed by Milton in the Seventeenth Year of his Age.

THEE, whose refulgent staff, and summons clear,
 Minerva's flock long time was wont t' obey,
 Although thyself an herald, famous here,
 The last of heralds, Death, has snatch'd away.
 He calls on all alike, nor even deigns
 To spare the office that himself sustains

Thy locks were whiter than the plumes display'd
 By Leda's paramour in ancient time,
 But thou wast worthy ne'er to have decay'd,
 Or Æson-like to know a second prime,
 Worthy, for whom some goddess should have won
 New life, oft kneeling to Apollo's son.

Commission'd to convene, with hasty call,
 The gowned tribes, how graceful wouldst thou stand!
 So stood Cyllenius erst in Priam's hall,
 Wing-footed messenger of Jove's command!
 And so Eurybates, when he address'd
 To Peleus' son, Atreides' proud behest

Dread queen of sepulchres! whose rig'rous laws
 And watchful eyes, run through the realms below,
 Oh, oft too adverse to Minerva's cause!
 Too often to the Muse not less a foe!
 Choose meaner marks, and with more equal aim
 Pierce useless drones, earth's burthen, and its shame!

Flow, therefore, tears for him, from ev'ry eye,
 All ye disciples of the Muses, weep!
 Assembling, all, in robes of sable dye,
 Around his bier, lament his endless sleep!
 And let complaining elegy rehearse,
 In every school her sweetest, saddest verse.

ELEGY III

ON THE DEATH OF THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

Composed in the Author's Seventeenth Year¹

SILENT I sat, dejected, and alone,
 Making, in thought, the public woes my own,
 When first aroso the imago in my breast
 Of England's suffering by that scourge, the Pest!
 How Death, his fun'ral torch and scythe in hand,
 Entering the lordliest mansions of the land,
 Has laid the gem illumin'd palace low,
 And level'd tribes of nobles at a blow
 I next deplor'd the fam'd paternal pair,
 Too soon to ashes turn'd, and empty air!
 The heroes next, whom snatch'd into the skies,
 All Belgia saw, and follow'd with her sighs,
 But thee far most I mourn'd, regretted most,
 Winton's chief shepherd, and her worthiest boast
 Pour'd out in tears I thus complaining said
 "Death, next in pow'r to him who rules the dead!
 Is't not enough that all the woodlands yield
 To thy fell force, and ev'ry verdant field,
 That lilies, at one noisome blast of thine,
 And ev'n the Cyprian queen's own roses, pine,
 That oaks themselves, although the running rill
 Suckle their roots, must wither at thy will,
 That all the winged nations, even those
 Whose heav'n-directed flight the futuro shows,
 And all the beasts that in dark forests stray,
 And all the herds of Proteus are thy prey
 Ah envious! arm'd with pow'rs so unconfin'd!
 Why stain thy hands with blood of human kind?
 Why take delight, with darts that never roam,
 To chaso a heav'n-born spirit from her home?"

While thus I mourn'd, the star of evening stood,
 Now newly risen above the western flood,

¹ "I would beat Warton if he were living, for supposing that Milton ever repented of his compliment to the memory of Bishop Andrews I neither do, nor can, nor will believe it. Milton's mind could not be narrowed by dwelling"—(To Walter Bagot, October 25, 1791.)

And Phœbus from his morning-goal again
 Had reach'd the gulfs of the Iberian main.
 I wish'd repose, and on my couch reclin'd,
 Took early rest, to night and sleep resign'd
 When—Oh for words to paint what I beheld!
 I seem'd to wander in a spacious field,
 Where all the champagn glow'd with purple light
 Like that of sunrise on the mountam height,
 Flow'rs over all the field, of every hue
 That ever Iris wore, luxuriant grew.
 Nor Chloris, with whom am'rous Zephyrs play.
 E'er dress'd Alcinous' garden half so gay.
 A silver current like the Tagus, roll'd
 O'er golden sands but sands of purer gold,
 With dewy airs Favonius fann'd the flow'rs,
 With airs awaken'd under rosy bow'rs.
 Such, poets feign, irradiated all o'er
 The sun's abode on India's utmost shore.

While I, that splendour, and the mingled shade
 Of fruitful vines, with wonder first survey'd,
 At once, with looks, that beam'd celestial grace,
 The seer of Winton stood before my face.
 His snowy vesture's hem descending low
 His golden sandals swept and pure as snow
 New-fallen shone the mitre on his brow
 Where'er he trod a tremulous sweet sound
 Of gladness shook the flow'ry scene around.
 Attendant angels clap their starry wings,
 The trumpet shakes the sky, all ether rings,
 Each chants his welcome, folds him to his breast
 And thus a sweeter voice than all the rest—
 "Ascend, my son! thy father's kingdom share!
 My son! henceforth be freed from ev'ry care!"

So spake the voice, and at its tender close
 With psaltry's sound th' angelic band arose,
 Then night retired, and chas'd by dawning day
 The visionary bliss pass'd all away.
 I mourn'd my banish'd sleep, with fond concern;
 Frequent to me may dreams like this return!

ELEGY IV

TO HIS TUTOR, THOMAS YOUNG, CHAPLAIN TO THE ENGLISH
FACTORY AT HAMBURGH

Written in the Author's Seventeenth Year

HENCE my epistle—skim the deep—fly o'er
Yon smooth expanse to the Teutonic shore!
Haste—lest a friend should grieve for thy delay—
And the gods grant that nothing thwart thy way!
I will myself invoke the king who binds,
In his Sicanian echoing vault, the winds,
With Doris and her nymphs, and all the throng
Of azure gods, to speed thee safe along
But rather to insure thy happier haste,
Ascend Medea's chariot, if thou mayst,
Or that whence young Triptolemus of yore
Descended, welcome on the Scythian shore
The sands, that line the German coast, desied,
To opulent Hamburga turn aside!
So called, if legendary fame be true,
From Hama, whom a club-arm'd Cimbrian slew!
There lives, deep learn'd and primitively just
A faithful steward of his Christian trust,
My friend, and favourite inmate of my heart,
That now is forc'd to want its better part!
What mountains now, and seas, alas! how wide!
From me this other, dearer self divide,
Dear, as the sage renown'd for moral truth
To the prime spirit of the Attic youth!
Dear, as the Stagyrto to Ammon's son!
His pupil, who disdain'd the world he won!
Nor so did Chiron, or so Phoenix shine
In young Achilles' eyes, as he in mine
First led by him thro' sweet Aonian shade,
Each sacred haunt of Pindus I survey'd,
And favour'd by the Muse, whom I implor'd,
Thrice on my lip the hallow'd stream I pour'd
But thrice the sun's resplendent chariot roll'd
To Arics, has new-tinged his fleece with gold,
And Chloris twice has dress'd the meadows gay,
And twice has summer parch'd their bloom away,

Since last delighted on his looks I hung,
 Or my ear drank the music of his tongue
 Fly, therefore, and surpass the tempest's speed,
 Aware thyself that there is urgent need!
 Him, entering, thou shalt haply seated see
 Beside his spouse, his infants on his knee
 Or turning, page by page, with studious look,
 Some bulky father, or God's holy boof
 Or minist'ring (which is his weightiest care)
 To Christ's assembled flock their heavenly fare.
 Give him, whatever his employment be,
 Such gratulation, as he claims from me!
 And, with a downcast eye, and carriage meek,
 Addressing him, forget not thus to speak!

"If, compass'd round with arms thou canst attend
 To verse, verse greets thee from a distant friend
 Long due, and late, I left the English shore,
 But make me welcome for that cause the more!
 Such from Ulysses, his chaste wife to cheer,
 The slow epistle came, though late, sincere
 But wherefore this? why palliate I the deed,
 For which the culprit's self could hardly plead?
 Self-charged, and self-condemn'd, his proper part
 He feels neglected, with an aching heart,
 But thou forgive—delinquents, who confess,
 And pray forgiveness, merit anger less;
 From timid foes the lion turns away,
 Nor yawns upon or rends a crouching prey,
 Even pike wielding Thracians learn to spare,
 Won by soft influence of a suppliant prayer;
 And Heav'n's dread thunderbolt arrested stands
 By a cheap victim, and uplifted hands
 Long had he wish'd to write, but was withheld,
 And, writes at last, by love alone compell'd,
 For fame, too often true, when she alarms,
 Reports thy neighbouring fields a scene of arms;
 Thy city against fierce besiegers barr'd,
 And all the Saxon chiefs for fight prepared
 Envy wastes thy country wide around,
 And saturates with blood the tainted ground,
 Mars rests contented in his Thrace no more,
 But gouds his steeds to fields of German gore,
 The ever-verdant olive fades and dies,
 And Peace, the trumpet hating goddess, flies,

Flies from that earth which justice long had left,
And leaves the world of its last guard bereft

"Thus horror girds thee round Meantime alone
Thou dwell'st, and helpless in a soil unknown;
Poor, and receiving from a foreign hand
The aid denied thee in thy native land.
Oh, ruthless country, and unfeeling more
Than thy own billow-beaten chalky shore!
Leav'st thou to foreign care the worthies, given
By Providence to guide thy steps to heav'n?
His ministers, commission'd to proclaim
Eternal blessings in a Saviour's name?
Ah then most worthy, with a soul unfed,
In Stygian night to lie for ever dead!
So once the venerable Tishbite stray'd
An exiled fugitive from shade to shade,
When, flying Ahab, and his fury wife,
In lone Arabian wilds, he shelter'd life,
So, from Philippa, wander'd forth forlorn
Cilician Paul, with sounding scourges torn,
And Christ himself, so left, and trod no more,
The thankless Gergesene's forbidden shore

"But thou take courage! strive against despair:
Quake not with dread, nor nourish anxious care!
Grim war, indeed, on ev'ry side appears,
And thou art menaced by a thousand spears,
Yet none shall drink thy blood, or shall offend
Ev'n the defenceless bosom of my friend.
For thee the argis of thy God shall hide,
Jehovah's self shall combat on thy side
The same, who vanquish'd under Sion's tow'rs,
At silent midnight, all Assyria's pow'rs;
The same, who overthrew in ages past,
Damascus' sons that laid Samaria waste!
Then king he fill'd and them with fatal fears
By mimic sounds of clarions in their ears,
Of hoofs, and wheels, and neighings from afar,
Of clashing armour, and the din of war

"Thou, therefore, (as the most afflicted may,)
Still hope, and triumph, o'er thy evil day!
I look forth, expecting happier times to come,
And to enjoy, once more, thy native home!"

ELEGY V

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

Written in the Author's Twentieth Year

TIME, never wand'ring from his annual round,
 Bids Zephyr breathe the spring, and thaw the ground;
 Bleak winter flies, new verdure clothes the plain,
 And earth assumes her transient youth again.
 Dream I, or also to the spring belong
 Increase of genius and new pow'rs of song?
 Spring gives them, and, how strange soe'er it seems,
 Impels me now to some harmonious themes
 Castalia's fountain and the forked hill,
 By day, by night, my raptur'd fancy fill,
 My bosom burns and heaves, I hear within
 A sacred sound, that prompts me to begin
 Lo! Phœbus comes, with his bright hair he blends
 The radiant laurel wreath Phœbus descends,
 I mount, and, undepress'd by cumb'rous clay,
 Through cloudy regions win my easy way,
 Rapt, through poetic shadowy haunts I fly
 The shrines all open to my dauntless eye,
 My spirit searches all the realms of light,
 And no Tartarean gulfs elude my sight.
 But this ecstasie trance—this glorious storm
 Of inspiration—what will it perform?
 Spring claims the verse, that with his influence glows
 And shall be paid with what himself bestows

Thou, veiled with op'ning foliage, lead'st the throng
 Of feather'd minstrels, Philomel! in song,
 Let us, in concert, to the season sing,
 Civic and sylvan heralds of the spring!
 With notes triumphant spring's approach declare!
 To spring, ye Muses, annual tribute bear!
 The Orient left, and Æthiopia's plains,
 The Sun now northward turns his golden reins,
 Night creeps not now, yet rules with gentle sway,
 And drives her dusky horrors swift away,
 Now less fatigued, on this ethereal plain
 Boötes follows his celestial wain.

And now the rad ant sentinels above,
 Less num'rous, watch around the courts of Jove,
 For, with the night, force, ambush, slaughter fly.
 And no gigantic guilt alarms the sky
 Not haply cries some shepherd, while he views,
 Recumbent on a rock, the redd'ning dews,
 Th' a night, thus surely, Phoebus mis'd the fair,
 Who stops his chariot by her sunny care
 Cynthia, delighted by the morn'g's glow,
 Speeds to the wood-blind and resumes her bow;
 Resigns her beams, and glad to disappear,
 Blesses his rid, who shortens her career.
 Come—Phoebus cries—Aurora come—too late
 Thou linger'st, slumbering, with thy wither'd mate!
 Leave him, and to Hymettus' top repair!
 Thy darling Cephalus expects thee there
 The goddess with a blush her love betrays,
 But mounts, and driving rapidly, obeys
 Earth now desires thee, Phoebus! and t'engage
 Thy warm embrace, casts off the guise of age,
 Desires thee, and deserves, for who so sweet,
 When her rich bosom courts thy genial heat?
 Her breath imports to every breeze that blows,
 Arabia's harvest and the Paphian rose.
 Her lofty front she diadems around
 With sacred pines, like Ops on Ida crown'd;
 Her dervy locks, with various flowers new-blown,
 She interweaves various, and all her own,
 For Proserpine in such a wreath attired,
 Taurian Dis himself with love inspired
 Fear not, lest, cold and coy, the nymph refuse!
 Herself, with all her sighing Zephyrs, sues,
 Each courts thee, fanning soft his scented wing,
 And all her groves with varbled wishes ring
 Nor, unendur'd and indigent, aspires
 The am'rous Earth to engage thy warm desires,
 But, rich in balmy drugs, assists thy claim,
 Divine Physician! to that glorious name
 If splendid recompense, if gifts can move
 Desire in thee (gifts often purchase love),
 She offers all the wealth her mountains hide,
 And all that rests beneath the boundless tide
 How oft, when heaving from the heav'nly steep,
 She sees thee playing in the western deep,
 How oft she cries—"Ah Phoebus! why repair
 Thy was of force, why seek refreshment there?

Can Tethys win thee? wherefore shouldst thou lave
 A face so fair in her unpleasant wave,
 Come, seek my green retreats, and rather choose
 To cool thy tresses in my crystal dew,
 The grassy turf shall yield thee sweeter rest;
 Come, lay thy evening glories on my breast,
 And breathing fresh, through many a humid rose,
 Soft whispering airs shall lull thee to repose!
 No fears I feel like Semele to die,
 Nor let thy burning wheels approach too nigh,
 For thou canst govern them, here therefore rest,
 And lay thy evening glories on my breast!"

Thus breathes the wanton Earth her am'rous flame,
 And all her countless offspring feel the same,
 For Cupid now through every region strays,
 Bright'ning his faded fires with solar rays,
 His new-strung bow sends forth a deadlier sound,
 And his new-pointed shafts more deeply wound,
 Nor Dian's self escapes him now untried,
 Nor even Vesta at her altar-side;
 His mother too repairs her beauty's wane,
 And seems sprung newly from the deep again
 Exulting youths the Hymeneal sing,
 With Hymen's name, roofs, rocks, and valleys ring;
 He, new-attired, and by the season drest,
 Proceeds, all, fragrant, in his saffron vest
 Now, many a golden-cinctured virgin roves
 To taste the pleasures of the fields and groves,
 All wish, and each alike, some fav'rite youth
 Hers, in the bonds of Hymeneal truth.
 Now pipes the shepherd through his reeds again,
 Nor Phillis wants a song that suits the strain,
 With songs the seaman hails the starry sphere,
 And dolphins rise from the abyss to hear,
 Jove feels himself the season, sports again
 With his fair spouse, and banquets all his train
 Now too the Satyrs, in the dusk of eve,
 Their mazy dance through flowery meadows weave,
 And neither god nor goat, but both in kind,
 Silvanus, wreathed with cypress, skips behind
 The Dryads leave their hollow sylvan cells
 To roam the banks and solitary dells,
 Pan riots now, and from his amorous chafe
 Ceres and Cybele seem hardly safe,

And Faunus, all on fire to reach the prize,
 In chase of some enticing Oread, flies
 She bounds before, but fears too swift a bound,
 And hidden lies, but wishes to be found
 Our shades entice th' immortals from above,
 And some kind pow'r presides o'er every grove;
 And long, ye pow'rs, o'er every grove preside,
 For all is safe and blest, where ye abide!
 Return, O Jove! the age of gold restore—
 Why choose to dwell where storms and thunder roar?
 At least, thou, Phoebus! moderate thy speed!
 Let not the vernal hours too swift proceed,
 Command rough Winter back, nor yield the pole
 Too soon to Night's encroaching long control?

ELEGY VI

TO CHARLES DODATI,

Who, while he spent his Christmas in the country, sent the Author a poetical Epistle, in which he requested that his verses, if not so good as usual, might be excused on account of the many feasts to which his friends invited him, and which would not allow him leisure to finish them as he wished

With no rich viands overcharged, I send
 Health, which perchance you want, my pamper'd
 friend,
 But wherefore should thy Muse tempt mine away
 From what she loves, from darkness into day?
 Art thou desirous to be told how well
 I love thee, and in verse? verse cannot tell
 For verse has bounds, and must in measure move;
 But neither bounds nor measure knows my love
 How pleasant, in thy lines described, appear
 December's harmless sports, and rural cheer!
 French spirits kindling with emulean fires,
 And all such gambols as the time inspires!

Think not that wine against good verse offends;
 Tho' Muse and Bacchus have been always friends,

Nor Pœbus blushes sometimes to be found
 With ivy, rather than with laurel, crown'd
 The Nine themselves oft-times have join'd the song,
 And revels of the Bacchanalian throng;
 Not even Ovid could in Scythian air
 Sing sweetly—why? no vine would flourish there
 What in brief numbers sung Anacreon's muse?
 Wine, and the rose, that sparkling wine bedews.
 Pindar with Bacchus glows—his every line
 Breathes the rich fragrance of inspiring wine
 While, with loud crash o'erturn'd, the chariot lies
 And brown with dust the fiery courser flies
 The Roman lyrist steep'd in wine his lays
 So sweet in Glyceria's and Chloe's praise.
 Now too the plenteous feast and mantling bowl
 Nourish the vigour of thy sprightly soul,
 The flowing goblet makes thy numbers flow,
 And casks not wine alone, but verse, bestow.
 Thus Phœbus favours, and the arts attend,
 Whom Bacchus and whom Ceres both befriend.
 What wonder, then, thy verses are so sweet,
 In which these triple powers so kindly meet?
 The lute now also sounds, with gold inwrought,
 And touch'd, with living fingers, nicely taught,
 In tap'stried halls, high roof'd, the sprightly lyre
 Directs the dancers of the virgin choir.
 If dull repletion fright the Muse away,
 Sights, gay as these, may more invite her stay;
 And, trust me, while the iv'ry keys resound,
 Fair damsels sport, and perfumes steam around,
 Apollo's influence, like ethereal flame,
 Shall animate at once thy glowing frame,
 And all the Muse shall rush into thy breast,
 By love and music's blended pow'rs possess'd.
 For num'rous pow'rs light Elegy befriend,
 Hear her sweet voice, and at her call attend;
 Her, Bacchus, Ceres, Venus, all approve,
 And, with his blushing mother, gentle Love.
 Hence to such bards we grant the copious use
 Of banquets, and the vine's delicious juice.
 But they, who demigods and heroes praise,
 And feats performed in Jove's more youthful days,
 Who now the counsels of high heaven explore,
 Now shades that echo the Cerberean roar,
 Simply let these, like him of Samos, live,
 Let herbs to them a bloodless banquet give.

In beechen goblets let their bev'rage shine,
 Cool from the crystal spring, their sober wine!
 Their youth should pass in innocence, secure
 From stain licentious, and in manners pure,
 Pure as the priest, when rob'd in white he stands
 The fresh lustration ready in his hands.
 Thus Janus liv'd, and thus, as poets write,
 Tiresias, wiser for his loss of sight!
 Thus exil'd Chalcas, thus the bard of Thrace,
 Melodious tamer of the savage race!
 Thus train'd by temp'rance Homer led, of Jove,
 His chief of Ithaca from shore to shore,
 Through magic Circe's monster-peopled reign,
 And shores insidious with the siren train,
 And through the realms where grisly spectres dwell,
 Whose tribes he fettered in a gory spell,
 For these are sacred bards, and, from above,
 Drink large infusions from the mind of Jove!

Wouldst thou (perhaps 'tis hardly worth thine ear)
 Wouldst thou be told my occupation here?
 The promis'd King of Peace employs my pen,
 Th' eternal covenant made for guilty men,
 The new-born Deity, with infant cries
 Filling the sordid hovel where he lies,
 The hymning angels, and the herald star,
 That led the Wise, who sought him from afar,
 And idols on their own unhallow'd shore
 Dash'd, at his birth, to be revered no more!

Thus theme on reeds of Albion I rehearse
 The dawn of that blest day inspired the verse,
 Verse, that, reserv'd in secret, shall attend
 Thy candid voice, my critic, and my friend!

ELEGY VII

Composed in the Author's Nineteenth Year

As yet a stranger to the gentle fires,
 That Amathusia's smiling queen inspires,
 Not seldom I derided Cupid's darts,
 And scorned his claim to rule all human hearts
 "Go, child," I said, "transfix the tim'rous dove!
 An easy conquest suits an infant love;

Enslave the sparrow, for such prize shall be
 Sufficient triumph to a chief like thee !
 Why aim thy idle arms at human kind ?
 Thy shafts prevail not 'gainst the noble mind."

The Cyprian heard, and, kindling into ire,
 (None kindles sooner) burn'd with double fire

It was the spring, and newly risen day
 Peep'd o'er the hamlets on the first of May ;
 My eyes too tender for the blaze of light,
 Still sought the shelter of retiring night,
 When Love approach'd, in painted plumes array'd,
 Th' insidious god his rattling darts betray'd,
 Nor less his infant features, and the sly,
 Sweet intimations of his threat'ning eye

Such the Sigeian boy is seen above,
 Filling the goblet for imperial Jove ,
 Such he, on whom the nymphs bestow'd *Ai*er charms,
 Hylas, who perish'd in a Naiad's arms
 Angry he seem'd, yet graceful in his ire,
 And added threats, not desitute of fire
 "My power," he said, "by others' pain alone,
 'Twere best to learn, now learn it by thy own !
 With those who feel my power that pow'r attest !
 And in thy anguish be my sway confest !
 I vanquish'd Phœbus, though returning vain
 From his new triumph o'er the Python slain,
 And, when he thinks on Daphne, even he
 Will yield the prize of archery to me
 A dart less true the Parthian horseman sped,
 Behind him kill'd, and conquer'd as he fled ,
 Less true th' expert Cydonian, and less true
 The youth whose shaft his latent Procris slew
 Vanquish'd by me, see huge Orion bend,
 By me Alcides, and Alcides' friend.
 At me should Jove himself a bolt design,
 His bosom first should bleed transfixt by mine.
 But all thy doubts this shaft will best explain,
 Nor shall it reach thee with a trivial pain,
 Thy Muse, vain youth' shall not thy peace insure,
 Nor Phœbus' serpent yield thy wound a cure "

He spoke, and, waving a bright shaft in air,
 Sought the warm bosom of the Cyprian fair

That thus a child should bluster in my ear,
Provok'd my laughter, more than moved my fear
I shunn'd not, therefore, public haunts, but stray'd
Careless in city or suburban shade,
And passing, and repassing, nymphs, that mov'd
With grace divine, beheld where'er I rov'd
Bright shone the vernal day with double blaze,
As beauty gave new force to Phœbus' rays
By no grave scruples check'd, I freely eyed
The dang'rous show, rash youth my only guide,
And many a look of many a fair unknown
Met full, unable to control my own
Put one I mark'd (then peace forsook my breast)
One—Oh, how far superior to the rest!
What lovely features! such the Cyprian queen
Herself might wish, and Juno wish her mien
The very nymph was she, whom when I dar'd
His arrows, Love had even then prepar'd!
Nor was himself remote, nor unsupplied
With torch well-trimm'd and quiver at his side,
Now to her lips he clung, her eye-lids now,
Then settled on her cheeks, or on her brow,
And with a thousand wounds from ev'ry part
Pierced and transpierced my undefended heart
A fever, new to me, of fierce desire
Now seiz'd my soul, and I was all on fire,
But she, the while, whom only I adore,
Was gone, and vanish'd, to appear no more.
In silent sadness I pursue my way,
I pause, I turn, proceed, yet wish to stay,
And while I follow her in thought, bemoan,
With tears, my soul's delight so quickly flown
When Jove had hurl'd him to the Lemnian coast,
So Vulcan sorrow'd for Olympus lost,
And so Oeclides, sinking into night,
From the deep gulph look'd up to distant light.

Wretch that I am, what hopes for me remain,
Who cannot cease to love, yet love in vain?
Oh could I once, once more behold the fair,
Speak to her, tell her, of the pangs I bear
Perhaps she is not adamant, would show
Perhaps some pity at my tale of woe
Oh inauspicious flame—'tis mine to prove
A matchless instance of disastrous love

Ah spare me gentle pow'r!—If such thou
 Let not thy deeds and nature disagree
 Spare me, and I will worship at no shrine
 With vow and sacrifice, save only thine
 Now I revere thy fires, thy bow, thy darts,
 Now own thee sov'reign of all human hearts
 Remove! no—grant me still this raging woe
 Sweet is the wretchedness that lovers know
 But pierce hereafter (should I chance to see
 One destin'd mine) at once both her and me

Such were the trophies that, in earlier days,
 By vanity seduced, I toil'd to raise,
 Studious, yet indolent, and urged by youth,
 'That worst of teachers' from the ways of truth,
 Till learning taught me, in his shady bow'r,
 To quit love's servile yoke, and spurn his pow'r
 Then, on a sudden, the fierce flame suppress,
 A frost continual settled on my breast,
 Whence Cupid fears his flames extinct to see,
 And Venus dreads a Diomed in me

EPIGRAMS

ON THE INVENTOR OF GUNS:

PRAISE in old times the sage Prometheus was,
 Who stole ethereal radiance from the sun,
 But greater he whose bold invention strove
 To emulate the fiery bolts of Jove

¹ The Poems on the subject of the Gunpowder Treason I have not translated, both because the matter of them is unpleasant, and because they are written with an asperity, which, however it might be warranted in Milton's day would be extremely unseasonable now.—O.

TO LEONORA SINGING AT ROME¹

ANOTHER Leonora once inspired
 Tasso, with fatal love to frenzy fired,
 But how much happier, lived he now, were he,
 Pierced with whatever pangs for love of thee!
 Since could he hear that heav'nly voice of thine,
 With Adriana's lute of sound divine,
 Fiercer than Pentheus' though his eye might roll,
 Or idiot apathy benumb his soul,
 Yet still, with medicinal sounds might cheer
 His senses wand'ring in a blind career,
 And sweetly breathing through his wounded breast,
 Charm, with soul-soothing song, his thoughts to rest.

TO THE SAME

NAPLES, too credulous, ah! boast no more
 The sweet-voiced Syren buried on thy shore,
 That, when Parthenope deceas'd, she gave
 Her sacred dust to a Chalcidic grave,
 For still she lives, but has exchanged the hoarse
 Pausilipo for Tiber's placid course,
 Where, *idol of all Rome, she now in chains,*
 Of magic song, both gods and men detains

THE COTTAGER AND HIS LANDLORD

A FABLE

A PEASANT to his lord paid yearly court,
 Presenting nippins, of so rich a sort
 That he, displeased to have a part alone,
 Removed the tree, that all might be his own
 The tree, too old to travel, though before
 So fruitful, wither'd, and would yield no more.

¹ I have translated only two of the three poetical compliments addressed to Leonora, as they appear to me far superior to what I have omitted.—O

The 'squire, perceiving all his labour void,
 Curs'd his own pains, so foolishly employ'd
 And "Oh," he cried, "that I had lived content
 With tribute, small indeed, but kindly meant!
 My av'rice has expensive proved to me,
 Has cost me both my pippins and my tree"

TO CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN.

WITH CROMWELL'S PICTURE

CHRISTINA, maiden of heroic mien!
 Star of the North! of northern stars the queen!
 Behold what wrinkles I have earn'd, and how
 The iron casque still chafes my vet'ran brow,
 While following fate's dark footsteps I fulfil
 The dictates of a hardy people's will
 But soften'd, in thy sight, my looks appear,
 Not to all Queens or Kings alike severe

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

ON THE DEATH OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

A PHYSICIAN

LEARN, ye nations of the earth,
 The condition of your birth,
 Now be taught your feeble state!
 Know that all must yield to fate!

If the mournful rover, Death,
 Say but once—"Resign your breath!"
 Vainly of escape you dream,
 You must pass the Stygian stream

Could the stoutest overcome
 Death's assault, and baffle doom,
 Hercules had both withstood,
 Undisens'd by Nessus' blood

No'er had Hector press'd the plain
By a trick of Pallas slain,
Nor the chief to Jove allied
By Achilles' phantom died.

Could enchantments life prolong,
Circe, sav'd by magic song,
Still had liv'd, and equal skill
Had preserv'd Medea still.

Dwelt in herbs and drugs a pow'r
To avert man's destin'd hour,
Learn'd Machaon should have known
Doubtless to avert his own

Chiron had surviv'd the smart
Of the Hydra-taunted dart,
And Jove's bolt had been, with ease,
Foul'd by Asclepiades

Thou too, sage! of whom forlorn
Helicon and Cithra mourn,
Still hadst fill'd thy princely place,
Regent of the gowned race

Hadst advanced to higher fame
Still, thy much-ennobled name,
Nor in Charon's skiff explor'd
The Tartarean gulf abhorr'd.

But resentful Proserpine,
Jealous of thy skill divine,
Snapping short thy vital thread,
Thee too number'd with the dead.

Wise and good! untroubled be
The green turf that covers thee!
Thence, in gay profusion, grow
All the sweetest flow'rs that blow

Pluto's consort aid thee rest!
Æacus pronounce thee blest!
To her home thy shade consign!
Make Elvsiu[m] ever thine!

ON THE DEATH OF THE BISHOP OF ELY

Written in the Author's Seventeenth Year

My lids with grief were tumid yet,
 And still my sullied cheek was wet
 With briny tears, profusely shed
 For venerable Winton dead,
 When Fame, whose tales of saddest sound,
 Alas! are ever truest found,
 The news through all our cities spread -
 Of yet another mitred head
 By ruthless fate to death consign'd,
 Ely, the honour of his land!

At once, a storm of passion heav'd
 My boiling bosom, much I griev'd,
 But more I rag'd, at ev'ry breath
 Devoting Death himself to death.
 With less revenge did Naso teem,
 When hated Ibis was his theme
 With less, Archilochus, denied
 The lovely Greek, his promis'd bride

But lo! while thus I execrate,
 Incens'd, the minister of fate,
 Wond'rous accents, soft yet clear,
 Wafted on the gale I hear

" Ah, much deluded! lay aside
 Thy threats, and anger misapplied!
 Art not afraid with sounds like these
 T' offend, where thou canst not appease?
 Death is not (wherefore dream'st thou thus?)
 The son of Night and Erebus,
 Nor was of fell Erynnis born
 On gulfs, where Chaos rules forlorn
 But sent from God, his presence leaves
 To gather home his ripen'd sheaves,
 To call encumber'd souls away
 From fleshy bonds to boundless day,
 (As when the winged hours excite,
 And summon forth the morning-light.)

And each to convoy to her place -
 Before th' Eternal Father's face
 But not the wicked—them, severe
 Yet just, from all their pleasures here
 He hurries to the realms below,
 Terrific realms of penal woe!
 Myself no sooner heard his call,
 Than, scaping through my prison-wall,
 I bade adieu to bolts and bars,
 And soar'd, with angels, to the stars,
 Like him of old, to whom 'twas giv'n
 To mount, on fiery wheels, to heav'n
 Boötes' waggon, slow with cold,
 Appall'd me not, nor to behold
 The sword that vast Orion draws,
 Or ev'n the Scorpion's horrid claws
 Beyond the Sun's bright orb I fly,
 And, far beneath my feet, descry
 Night's dread goddess, seen with awe,
 Whom her winged dragons draw
 Thus, ever wond'ring at my speed,
 Augmented still as I proceed,
 I pass the planetary sphere,
 The Milky Way—and now appear
 Heav'n's crystal battlements, her door
 Of massy pearl, and em'rald floor

"But here I cease For never can
 The tongue of once a mortal man
 In suitable description trace
 The pleasures of that happy place,
 Suffice it that those joys divine
 Are all, and all for ever, mine!"

NATURE UNIMPAIRED BY TIME

AH, how the human mind wearies herself
 With her own wand'rings, and, involv'd in gloom
 Impenetrable, speculates amiss!
 Measuring, in her folly, things divine
 By human, laws inscrib'd on adamant
 By laws of man's device, and counsels fixt
 For ever, by the hours that pass and die.

How?—shall the face of Nature then be plough'd
 Into deep wrinkles, and shall years at last
 On the great Parent fix a sterilo curse?
 Shall even she confess old age, and halt,
 And, palsy-smitten, shake her starry brows?
 Shall foul Antiquity, with rust, and drought,
 And famine, vex the radiant worlds above?
 Shall Time's unsated maw crave and engulf
 The very heav'ns that regulate his flight?
 And was the Sire of all able to fence
 His works, and to uphold the circling worlds,
 But, through improvident and heedless haste,
 Let slip th' occasion?—so then—all is lost—
 And in some future evil hour, yon arch
 Shall crumble, and come thund'ring down, the poet
 Jar in collision, the Olympian king
 Fall with his throne, and Pallas, holding forth
 The terrors of the Gorgon shield in vain,
 Shall rush to the abyss, like Vulcan hurl'd
 Down into Lemnos, through the gate of heav'n
 Thou also, with precipitated wheels,
 Phœbus! thy own son's fall shalt imitate,
 With hideous ruin shalt impress the deep
 Suddenly, and the flood shall reek and hiss,
 At the extinction of the lamp of day
 Then too shall Hæmus, cloven to his base,
 Be shatter'd, and the huge Ceraunian hills,
 Once weapons of Tartarean Dis, immers'd
 In Erebus, shall fill himself with fear

No The Almighty Father surer laid
 His deep foundations, and providing well
 For the event of all, the scales of Fate
 Suspended, in just equipoise, and bade
 His universal works, from age to age,
 One tenor hold, perpetual, undisturb'd.

Hence the prime mover wheels itself about
 Continual, day by day, and with it bears
 In social measure swift the heav'ns around.
 Not tardier now is Saturn than of old,
 Nor radiant less the burning casque of Mars.
 Phœbus, his vigour unimpair'd, still shows
 Th' effulgence of his youth, nor needs the god
 A downward course, that he may warm the vulcan:
 But, ever rich in influence, runs his road,

Sign after sign, through all the heav'nly zone
 Beautiful, as at first, ascends the star
 From odoriferous Ind, whose office is
 To gather home betimes th' ethereal flock,
 To pour them o'er the skies again at eve,
 And to discriminate the night and day
 Still Cynthia's changeful horn waxes and wanes
 Alternate, and with arms extended still
 She welcomes to her breast her brother's beams
 Nor have the elements deserted yet
 Their functions thunder, with as loud a stroke
 As erst, smites thro' the rocks, and scatters them
 The east still howls, still the relentless north
 Invades the shudd'ring Seythian, still he breathes
 The winter, and still rolls the storms along
 The king of ocean, with his wonted force,
 Beats on Pelorus, o'er the deep is heard
 The hoarse alarm of Triton's sounding shell,
 Nor swim the monsters of the Ægean sea
 In shallows, or beneath diminish'd waves
 Thou too, thy ancient vegetative pow'r
 Enjoy'st, O earth! Narcissus still is sweet,
 And Phœbus still thy favourite, and still
 Thy fav'rite, Cytherea! both retain
 Their beauty, nor the mountains, ore enrich'd
 For punishment of man, with purer gold
 Teem'd ever, or with brighter gems the deep

Thus, in unbroken series, all proceeds,
 And shall, till wide involving either pole,
 And the immensity of yonder heav'n,
 The final flames of destiny absorb
 The world, consum'd in one enormous pyre!

ON THE PLATONIC IDEA,

AS IT WAS UNDERSTOOD BY ARISTOTLE.

YE sister pow'rs, who o'er the sacred groves
 Preside, and thou, fair mother of them all,
 Mnemosyne! and thou, who in thy grot
 Immense, reclined at leisure, hast in charge
 The archives, and the ord'nances of Jove
 And dost record the festivals of heav'n

Eternity '—Inform us who is He,
 That great original by nature chosen
 To be the archetype of human kind,
 Unchangeable, immortal, with the poles
 Themselves coeval, one, yet ev'rywhere,
 An image of the God who gave him being?
 Twin-brother of the goddess born from Jove,
 He dwells not in his father's mind, but, though
 Of common nature with ourselves, exists
 Apart, and occupies a local home
 Whether, companion of the stars, he spend
 Eternal ages, roaming at his will
 From sphere to sphere the tenfold heav'ns, or dwell
 On the moon's side that nearest neighbours earth,
 Or torpid on the banks of Lethe sit
 Among the multitude of souls ordain'd
 To flesh and blood, or whether (as may chance)
 That vast and giant model of our kind
 In some far distant region of this globe
 Sequester'd stalk, with lifted head on high
 O'ertow'ring Atlas, on whose shoulders rest
 The stars, terrific even to the gods
 Never the Theban seer, whose blindness proved
 His best illumination, him beheld
 In secret vision, never him the son
 Of Pleione, amid the noiseless night
 Descending, to the prophet-choir reveal'd,
 Him never knew th' Assyrian priest, who yet
 The ancestry of Ninus chronicles,
 And Belus, and Osiris, far-renown'd,
 Nor even thrice great Hermes, although skill'd
 So deep in myst'ry, to the worshippers
 Of Isis show'd a prodigy like him
 And thou, who hast immortalized the shades
 Of Academus, if the schools received
 This monster of the fancy first from thee,
 Either recall at once the banish'd bards
 To thy republic, or thyself evinced
 A wilder fabulist, go also forth

TO HIS FATHER

On that Pieria's spring would through my breast
 Pour its inspiring influence, and rush
 No rill, but rather an o'erflowing flood!
 That, for my venerable Father's sake
 All meaner themes renounced my Muse, on wings,
 Of duty borne, might reach a loftier strain
 For thee, my Father! howso'er it please,
 She frames this slender work, nor know I aught
 That may thy gifts more suitably requite,
 Though to requite them suitably would ask
 Returns much nobler, and surpassing far
 The meagre stores of verbal gratitude
 But, such as I possess, I send thee all
 This page presents thee in their full amount
 With thy son's treasures, and the sum is nought,
 Nought, save the riches that from airy dream
 In secret grottoes, and in laurel bow'rs,
 I have, by golden Cho's gift, acquired.

Verse is a work divine, despise not thou
 Verse therefore, which evinces (nothing more)
 Man's heavenly source, and which, retaining still
 Some scintillations of Promethean fire,
 Bespeaks him animated from above
 The gods love verse, the infernal Pow'rs themselves
 Confess the influence of verse, which stirs
 The lowest deep, and binds in triple chains
 Of adamant both Pluto and the Shades
 In verse the Delphic priestess, and the pale,
 Tremulous Sybil, make the future known,
 And he who sacrifices, on the shrine
 Hangs verse, both when he smites the threat'ning
 bull,
 And when he spreads his reeking entrails wide
 To scrutinize the Fates enveloped there
 We, too, ourselves, what time we seek again
 Our native skies, and one eternal now
 Shall be the only measure of our being,
 Crown'd all with gold, and chanting to the lyre
 Harmonious verse, shall range the courts above,
 And make the starry firmament resound.

And, even now, the fiery spirit pure
 That wheels yon circling orbs directs, himself,
 Their mazy dance with melody of verse
 Unutt'able, immortal, hearing which,
 Huge Ophiuchus holds his hiss suppress'd,
 Orion soften'd, drops his ardent blade,
 And Atlas stands unconscious of his load
 Verse graced of old the feasts of kings, ere yet
 Luxurious dainties, destined to the gulf
 Immense of gluttony, were known, and ere
 Lyæus deluged yet the temp'rate board.
 Then sat the bard a customary guest
 To share the banquet, and, his length of locks
 With beechen honours bound, proposed in verse
 The characters of heroes and their deeds
 To imitation, sang of Chaos old,
 Of nature's birth, of gods that crept in search
 Of acorns fall'n, and of the thunder-bolt
 Not yet produced from Etna's fiery cave
 And what avails, at last, tune without voice,
 Devoid of matter? Such may suit perhaps
 The rural dance, but such was ne'er the song
 Of Orpheus, whom the streams stood still to hear
 And the oaks follow'd Not by chords alone
 Well touch'd, but by resistless accents more
 To sympathetic tears the ghosts themselves
 He moved these praises to his verse he owes

Nor thou persist, I pray thee, still to slight
 The sacred Nine, and to imagine vain
 And useless, Pow'rs, by whom inspired, thyself
 Art skilful to associate verse with airs
 Harmonious, and to give the human voice
 A thousand modulations, heir by right
 Indisputable of Arion's fame
 Now say, what wonder is it, if a son
 Of thine delight in verse, if so conjom'd
 In close affinity, we sympathize
 In social arts, and kindred studies sweet?
 Such distribution of himself to us
 Was Phœbus' choice, thou hast thy gift, and I
 Mine also, and between us we receive,
 Father and son, the whole inspiring God.

No! howsoe'er the semblance thou assume
 Of hate, thou hatest not the gentle Muse,

My Father ! for thou never bad'st me tread
 The beaten path, and broad, that leads right on
 To opulence, nor didst condemn thy son
 To the insipid clamours of the bar,
 To laws voluminous, and ill observed,
 But, wishing to enrich me more, to fill
 My mind with treasure, led'st me far away
 From city din to deep retreats, to banks
 And streams Aonian, and, with free consent,
 Didst place me happy at Apollo's side
 I speak not now, on more important themes
 Intent, of common benefits, and such
 As nature bids, but of thy larger gifts,
 My Father ! who when I had open'd once
 The stores of Roman rhetoric, and learn'd
 The full-toned language of the eloquent Greeks,
 Whose lofty music graced the lips of Jove,
 Thyself didst counsel me to add the flow'rs
 That Gallia boasts, those too with which the smooth
 Italian his degen'rate speech adorns,
 That witnesses his mixture with the Goth,
 And Palestine's prophetic songs divine
 To sum the whole, what'e'r the heav'n contains,
 The earth beneath it, and the air between,
 The rivers and the restless deep, may all
 Prove intellectual gain to me, my wish
 Concurring with thy will, seience herself,
 All cloud removed, inclines her beauteous head,
 And offers me the lip, if, dull of heart,
 I shrink not, and decline her gracious boon

Go now, and gather dross, ye sordid minds,
 That covet it, what could my Father more ?
 What more could Jove himself, unless he gave
 His own abode, tho heav'n in which he reigns ?
 More eligible gifts than these were not
 Apollo's to his son, had they been safe,
 As they were insecure, who made the boy
 The world's vice luminary, bade him rule
 The radiant chariot of the day, and bind
 To his young brows his own all daz'ling wreath
 I therefore, although last and least, my place
 Among the learned in the laurel grove
 Will hold, and where the conqu'ror's ivy twines
 Henceforth exempt from the unletter'd throng
 Profane, nor even to be seen by such

Away then, sleepless Care, Complaint, away,
 And, Envy, with thy "jealous leer malign!"
 Nor let the monster Calumny shoot forth
 Her venom'd tongue at me Detested foes!
 Ye all are impotent against my peace,
 For I am privileg'd, and bear my breast
 Safe, and too high, for your viperian wound

But thou, my Father! since to render thanks
 Equivalent, and to requite by deeds
 Thy liberality, exceeds my power,
 Suffice it, that I thus record thy gifts,
 And bear them treasured in a grateful mind!
 Ye too, the favourite pastime of my youth,
 My voluntary numbers, if ye dare
 To hope longevity, and to survive
 Your master's funeral, not soon absorb'd
 In the oblivious Lethean gulf,
 Shall to futurity perhaps convey
 This theme, and by these praises of my sire
 Improve the Fathers of a distant age!

TO SALSILLUS, A ROMAN POET,

MUCH INDISPOSED¹

My halting Muse, that dragg'st by choice along
 Thy slow, slow step, in melancholy song,
 And lik'st that pace, expressive of thy cares,
 Not less than Diopem's sprighther airs,
 When, in the dance, she beats, with measured tread,
 Heav'n's floor, in front of Juno's golden bed,
 Salute Salsillus, who to verse divine
 Prefers, with partial love, such lays as mine.
 Thus writes that Milton then, who wafted o'er
 From his own nest, on Albion's stormy shore,
 When Eurus, fiercest of the Æolian band,
 Sweeps, with ungovern'd rage, the blasted land,

¹ The original is written in a measure called *Sotizon*, which signifies *limping*, and the measure is so denominated because, though in other respects iambic, it terminates with a Spondee, and has consequently a more tardy movement.

The reader will immediately see that this property of the Latin verse cannot be imitated in English.—O

Of late to more serene Ausonia came
 To view her cities of illustrious name,
 To prove, himself a witness of the truth,
 How wise her elders, and how learn'd her youth
 Much good, Salsillus! and a body free
 From all disease, that Milton asks for thee,
 Who now endur'st the languor and the pains,
 That bile inflicts, diffused through all thy veins,
 Relentless malady! not moved to spare
 By thy sweet Roman voice and Lesbian air!

Health, Hebe's sister, sent us from the skies,
 And thou, Apollo, whom all sickness flies,
 Pythius, or Parn, or what name divine
 Soe'er thou choose, haste, heal a priest of thine!
 Ye groves of Pannus, and ye hills, that melt
 With vinous dews, where meek Evander dwelt!
 If nught salubrious in your confines grow,
 Strive which shall soonest heal your poet's woe,
 That, render'd to the Muse he loves, again
 He may enchant the meadows with his strain.
 Numa, reclined in everlasting ease,
 Amid the shade of dark embow'ring trees,
 Viewing with eyes of unabated fire
 His loved Algeria, shall that strain admire
 So sooth'd, the tumid Tiber shall revere
 The tombs of kings, nor desolate the year,
 Shall curb his waters with a friendly rein,
 And guide them harmless till they meet the main.

TO GIOVANNI BATTISTA MANSO, MARQUIS OF VILLA

MILTON'S ACCOUNT OF MANSO.

Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa, is an Italian nobleman of the highest estimation among his countrymen, for genius, literature, and military accomplishments. To him Torquato Tasso addressed his "Dialogues on Friendship," for he was much the friend of Tasso, who has also celebrated him among the other princes of his country, in his poem entitled "Gerusalemme Conquistata," book xx

*"Fra cavalieri magnanimi, e cortesi,
Risplende il Manso"*

During the Author's stay at Naples, he received at the hands of the Marquis a thousand kind offices and civilities, and, desirous not to appear ungrateful, sent him this poem a short time before his departure from that city

THESE verses also to thy praise the Nine,
Oh Manso! happy in that theme design,
For Gallus and Mæcenas gone, they see
None such besides, or whom they love as thee,
And if my verse may give the meed of fame,
Thine too shall prove an everlasting name
Already such it shines in Tasso's page,
(For thou wast Tasso's friend) from age to age,
And, next, the Muse consign'd (not unaware
How high the charge) Marino to thy care,
Who, singing to the nymphs Adonis' praise,
Boasts thee the patron of his copious lays
To thee alone the poet would entrust
His latest vows, to thee alone his dust,
And thou with punctual piety hast paid,
In labour'd brass, thy tribute to his shade
Nor thus contented thee—but lest the grave
Should aught absorb of theirs which thou couldst save,
All future ages thou hast deign'd to teach
The use, lot, genius, character of each,
Eloquent as the Carian sage, who, true
To his great theme, the life of Homer drew

I, therefore, tho' a stranger youth, who come
Chill'd by rude blasts, that freeze my northern home

Thee dear to Olio confident proclaim,
 And thine, for Phœbus' sake, a deathless name
 Nor thou, so kind, wilt view with scornful eye
 A Muse scarce rear'd beneath our sullen sky,
 Who fears not, indiscreet as she is young,
 To seek in Latium hearers of her song
 We too, where Thames with his unsullied waves
 The tresses of the blue hair'd Ocean laves,
 Hear oft by night, or, slumb'ring, seem to hear,
 O'er his wide stream the swan's voice warbling clear,
 And we could boast a Tityrus of yore,
 Who trod, a welcome guest, your happy shore

Yes—dreary as we own our northern clime,
 E'en we to Phœbus raise the polish'd rhyme
 We too serve Phœbus, Phœbus has receiv'd
 (If legends old may claim to be believ'd)
 No sordid gifts from us, the golden ear,
 The burnish'd apple, ruddiest of the year,
 The fragrant crocus, and to grace his fane,
 Fair damsels chosen from the Druid train,
 Druids, our native bards in ancient time,
 Who gods and heroes prais'd in hallow'd rhyme
 Hence, often as the maids of Greece surround
 Apollo's shrine with hymns of festive sound,
 They name the virgins, who arriv'd of yore,
 With British offerings, on the Delian shore,
 Loxo, from giant Corineus sprung,
 Upris, on whose blest lips the future hung,
 And Hecæerge, with the golden hair,
 All deck'd with Pictish hues, and all with bosoms bare

'Thou, therefore, happy sage, whatever clime
 Shall ring with Tasso's praise in after time,
 Or with Marino's, shalt be known their friend,
 And with an equal flight to fame ascend
 The world shall hear how Phœbus, and the Nine
 Were inmates once, and willing guests of thine
 Yet Phœbus, when of old constrain'd to roam
 The earth, an exile from his heavenly home,
 Enter'd, no willing guest, Admetus' door,
 Though Hercules had ventur'd there before
 But gentle Chiron's cave was near, a scene
 Of rural peace, cloth'd with perpetual green,
 And thither, oft as respite he required
 From rustie clamours loud, the god retir'd

There, many a time, on Peneus' bank reclin'd
 At some oak's root, with ivy thick entwinn'd,
 Won by his hospitable friend's desire,
 He sooth'd his pains of exile with the lyre
 Then shook the hills, the trembled Peneus' shore,
 Nor Oeta felt his load of forests more,
 The upland elms descended to the plain,
 And softened lynxes wondered at the strain

Well may we think, O dear to all above!
 Thy birth distinguish'd by the smile of Jove,
 And that Apollo shed his kindest pow'r,
 And Maia's son, on that propitious hour,
 Since only minds so born can comprehend
 A poet's worth, or yield that worth a friend
 Hence, on thy yet unfaded cheek appears
 The lingering freshness of thy greener years,
 Hence, in thy front, and features, we adore
 Nature unwither'd and a mind entire
 Oh might so true a friend to me belong,
 So skill'd to grace the votaries of song,
 Should I recall hereafter into rhyme
 The kings and heroes of my native clime,
 Arthur the chief, who even now prepares,
 In subterraneous being, future wars,
 With all his martial knights, to be restored,
 Each to his seat around the federal board,
 And oh, if spirit fail me not, disperse
 Our Saxon plunderers, in triumphant verse!
 Then, after all, when, with the past content,
 A life I finish, not in silence spent,
 Should he, kind mourner, o'er my death-bed bend,
 I shall but need to say—"Be yet my friend!"
 He, too, perhaps, shall bid the marble breathe
 To honour me, and with the graceful wreath,
 Or of Parnassus, or the Paphian isle,
 Shall bind my brows—but I shall rest the while.
 Then also, if the fruits of faith endure,
 And Virtue's promised recompence be sure,
 Born to those seats, to which the blest aspire
 By purity of soul and virtuous fire,
 These rites, as fate permits, I shall survey
 With eyes illumin'd by celestial day,
 And, ev'ry cloud from my pure spirit driv'n
 Joy in the bright beatitude of Heav'n!

ON THE DEATH OF DAMON

THE ARGUMENT

Thyrsis and Damon, shepherds and neighbours, had always pursued the same studies, and had, from their earliest days, been united in the closest friendship. Thyrsis, while travelling for improvement, received intelligence of the death of Damon, and, after a time, returning and finding it true, deplores himself, and his solitary condition, in this poem.

By Damon is to be understood Charles Deodati, connected with the Italian city of Lucca by his father's side, in other respects an Englishman—a youth of uncommon genius, erudition, and virtue.

Ye nymphs of Himeræ (for ye have shed
Tears for Daphnis, and for Hylas dead,
And over Bion's long lamented bier,
The fruitless meed of many a sacred tear)
Now through the villas lav'd by Thames rehearse
The woes of Thyrsis in Sicilian verse,
What sighs he heaved, and how, with groans profound,
He made the woods and hollow rocks resound
Young Damon dead, nor even ceased to pour
His lonely sorrows at the midnight hour

The green wheat twice had nodded in the ear,
And golden harvest twice enrich'd the year,
Since Damon's lips had gasp'd for vital air
The last, last time, nor Thyrsis yet was there,
For he, enamour'd of the muse, remain'd
In Tuscan Fiorenza long detain'd,
But, stored at length with all he wished to learn,
For his flock's sake now hasted to return,
And when the shepherd had resumed his seat
At the elm's root, within his old retreat,
Then 'twas his lot, then, all his loss to know,
And, from his burthen'd heart, he vented thus his woe

¹ "A pastoral, in my judgment, equal to any of Virgil's *Bucolices* but of which Dr Johnson (so it pleased him) speaks, as I remember, contemptuously"—(Cowper to Hu-dis, Dec 10, 1791)

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you
Alas! what duties shall I suppose
In heav'n or earth, concern'd for human woe,
Since, oh my Damon! their severe decree
So soon condemns me to regret of thee!
Depart'st thou this, thy virtues unrepa'd
With fame and honour, like a vulgar shade!
Let him forbid it, whose bright rod controls,
And sep'rates sordid from illustrious souls,
Drive far the rabble, and to thee assign
A happier lot, with spirits worthy thine

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
are due

To other cares than those of feeding you
Whate'er befall, unless by cruel chance
The wolf first give me a forbidding glance,
Thou shalt not moulder undeplord, but long
Thy praise shall dwell on ev'ry shepherd's tongue,
To Daphnis first they shall delight to pay,
And, after him, to thee the voice lay,
While Pales shall the flocks and pastures love,
Or Faunus to frequent the field or grove,
At least, if ancient piety and truth,
With all the learned labours of thy youth,
May serve thee aught, or to have left behind
A sorrowing friend, and of the tuneful kind

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you
Yes, Damon! such thy sure reward shall be,
But ah, what doom awaits unhappy me?
Who, now, my pains and perils shall divide,
As thou wast wont, for ever at my side,
Both when the rugged frost annoy'd our feet,
And when the herbage all was parch'd with heat,
Whether the grim wolf's ravage to prevent,
Or the huge lion's, arm'd with darts, we went?
Whose converse, now, shall calm my stormy day,
With charming song, who now beguile my way?

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you

In whom shall I confide? whose counsel find
 A balmy med'cine for my troubled mind?
 Or whose discourse, with innocent delight,
 Shall fill me now, and cheat the wintry night,
 While lasses on my hearth the jolly pear,
 And black'ning chesnuts start and crackle there,
 While storms abroad the dreary meadows whelm,
 And the wind thunders through the neighb'ring elm?

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
 are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you.
 Or who, when summer suns their summit reach,
 And Pan sleeps hidden by the shelt'ring beech,
 When shepherds disappear, nymphs seek the sedge,
 And the stretch'd rustic snores beneath the hedge,
 Who then shall render me thy pleasant vein
 Of Attic wit, thy jests, thy smiles again?

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
 are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you
 Where glens and vales are thickest overgrown
 With tangled boughs, I wander now alone,
 Till night descend, while blust'ring wind and show'r
 Beat on my temples through the shatter'd bow'r

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
 are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you
 Alas! what rampant weeds now shame my fields,
 And what a mildew'd crop the furrow yields!
 My rambling vines, unwedded to the trees,
 Bear shrivell'd grapes, my myrtles fail to please,
 Nor please me more my flocks, they, slighted, turn
 Their unavailing looks on me, and mourn

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
 are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you
 Ægon invites me to the hazel grove,
 Amyntas, on the river's bank to rove,
 And young Alpheisbæus to a seat
 Where branching elms exclude the mid day heat
 'Here fountains spring—here mossy hullocks rise,
 Here Zephyr whispers, and the stream replies'

Thus each persuades, but, deaf to ev'ry call,
I gain the thickets, and escapo them all

"Go, seek your home, my lambs, my thoughts
are due

To other cares, than those of feeding you.
Then Mopsus said, (the same who reads so well
The voice of birds, and what the stars foretell,
For he by chance had noticed my return)
'What means thy sullen mood, this deep concern'
Ah Thyrsis! thou art either crazed with love,
Or some sinister influence from above,
Dull Saturn's influence oft the shepherds rue
His leaden shaft oblique has pierced thee through'

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
The nymphs amazed, my melancholy see,
And, 'Thyrsis!' cry—'what will become of thee'
What wouldst thou, Thyrsis? such should not appear
The brow of youth, stern, gloomy, and severe,
Brisk youth should laugh, and love—ah shun the fate
Of those, twice wretched mopes! who love too late!"

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,
My thoughts are all now due to other care
Ægle with Hyas came, to soothe my pain,
And Baucis' daughter, Dryope, the vain,
Fair Dryope, for voice and finger neat
Known far and near, and for her self-conceit,
Chloris too came, whose cottage on the lands
That skirt the Idumanian current stands,
But all in vain they came, and but to see
Kind words, and comfortable, lost on me.

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,
My thoughts are all now due to other care
Ah blest indifference of the playful herd,
None by his fellow chosen, or preferr'd!
No bonds of amity the flocks enthrall,
But each associates and is pleased with all,
So graze the dappled deer in num'rous droves,
And all his kind alike the zebra loves,
The same law governs, where the billows roar
And Proteus' wavespread the desert shore;

The sparrow, meanest of the feather'd race,
 His fit companion finds in ev'ry place,
 With whom he picks the grain that suits him best,
 Flirts here and there, and late returns to rest,
 And whom if chance the falcon make his prey,
 Or hedger with his well aim'd arrow slay,
 For no such loss the gay survivor grieves,
 New love he seeks, and new delight receives
 We only, an obdurate kind, rejoice,
 Scorning all others in a single choice
 We scarce in thousands meet one kindred nund,
 And if the long sought good at last we find,
 When least we fear it Death our treasure steals
 And gives our heart a wound that nothing heals

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,
 My thoughts are all now due to other care
 Ah, what delusion lured me from my flocks,
 To traverse Alpine snows and rugged rocks!
 What need so great had I to visit Rome,
 Now sunk in ruins, and herself a tomb?
 Or, had she flourish'd still as when, of old,
 For her sake Tityrus forsook his fold,
 What need so great had I to incur a pause
 Of thy sweet intercurso for such a cause,
 For such a cause to place the roaring sea,
 Rocks, mountains, woods, between my friend and me?
 Else, had I grasp'd thy feeble hand, composed
 Thy decent limbs, thy drooping eyelids closed,
 And, at the last, had said—'Farewell—ascend—
 Nor even in the skies forget thy friend!'

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare,
 My thoughts are all now due to other care
 Although well-pleased, ye tuneful Tuscan swains!
 My mind the mem'ry of your worth retains,
 Yet not your worth can teach me less to mourn
 My Damon lost—He too was Tuscan born,
 Born in your Lucca, city of renown!
 And wit possess'd, and genius, like your own.
 Oh how elate was I, when stretch'd beside
 The murmur'ing course of Arno's breezy tide,
 Beneath the poplar grove I pass'd my hours,
 Now cropping myrtles, and now vernal flow'rs,
 And hearing, as I lay at ease along,
 Your swains contending for the prize of song!

I also dared attempt (and, as it seems,
 Not much displeas'd with my long) verse a theme,
 For even I can present'st boast to you,
 The shepherd's pipe, and owner's basket too,
 And Daphni and Brincini, both have made
 My name familiar to the heechen's side,
 And they are loved, and each in every place
 Renown'd for song, and both of Lydian race.

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare,
 My thoughts are all now due to other care.
 While bright the dory grows with sunbeams show,
 And I stood here long in a lush of dew
 How often have I said that thou I had found
 I re then thy work and judgment never again
 Now Daphni sings, or Brincini tells for hours,
 Or under work for various use I repeat
 How oft, indulging fancy, I have I pleas'd
 New scenes of pleasure, that I hoped at hand
 Call'd thee abroad as I was wont, and said—
 'What hast thou my friend?—'—'—'—'—'—'—'—'—'—'—'
 Haste, let us forth together, and beguile
 The heat beneath yew's whispering shade awhile,
 Or on the margin of Colne's clear flood,
 Or where Cass' belian's grey turfs stand
 There thou shalt call me simple, and shalt teach
 Thy friend the new and better parts of each,
 From the tall blue bell to the daisy's seed,
 What the dry land and what the marshes breed,
 For all their kinds alike to thee are known,
 And the whole art of Galen is thy own.
 Ah, perish Galen's art, as I wather'd be
 The useless herbs that gave not health to thee!
 Twelve evenings since, as in poetic dream
 I meditating sat some antient theme,
 The reeds no sooner touch'd my lip, though new,
 And unessay'd before then wide they flew,
 Bursting their waxen bands, nor could sustain
 The deep-toned music of the solemn strain;
 And I am vain perhaps, but I will tell
 How proud a theme I choose—ye groves, farewell!

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare,
 My thoughts are all now due to other care.
 Of Brutus Dardan chief, my song shall be,
 How with his barks he plough'd the British sea,

First from Rutupia's tow'ring headland seen,
 And of his consort's reign, fair Imogen,
 Of Brennus and Belinus, brothers bold,
 And of Arviragus, and how of old
 Our hardy sires th' Armorican controll'd,
 And of the wife of Gorlois, who, surpris'd
 By Uther, in her husband's form disguis'd,
 (Such was the force of Merlin's art) became
 Pregnant with Arthur of heroic fame
 These themes I now revolve—and oh—if Fate
 Proportion to these themes my lengthen'd date,
 Adieu my shepherd's reed—yon pine-tree bough
 Shall be thy future home, there dangle thou
 Forgotten and disus'd, unless ere long
 Thou change thy Latian for a British song,
 A British?—even so—the pow'rs of man
 Are bounded, little is the most he can,
 And it shall well suffice me, and shall be
 Fame, and proud recompence enough for me,
 If Usa, golden-hair'd, my verse may learn,
 If Alain bending o'er his crystal urn,
 Swift-whirling Abra, Trent's o'ershadow'd stream.
 Thames, lovelier far than all in my esteem,
 Tamar's ore-tinctur'd flood, and, after these,
 The wave-worn shores of utmost Orcades

“ Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare,
 My thoughts are all now due to other care
 All this I kept in leaves of laurel-rind
 Enfolded safe, and for thy view design'd,
 This—and a gift from Manso's hand beside,
 (Manso not least his native city's pride)
 Two cups, that radiant as their giver shone
 Adorn'd by sculpture with a double zone
 The spring was graven there, here slowly wind
 The Red sea shores with groves of spices lin'd
 Her plumes of various hues amid the boughs
 The sacred, solitary Phoenix shows,
 And, watchful of the dawn, reverts her head,
 To see Aurora leave her wat'ry bed.
 —In other part, th' expansive vault above,
 And there too, even there, the god of love,
 With quiver arm'd he mounts, his torch displays
 A vivid light, his gem-tipt arrows blaze,
 Around his bright and fiery eyes he rolls,
 Nor aims at vulgar minds or little souls,

Nor deigns one look below, but aiming high
Sends every arrow to the lofty sky,
Hence forms divine, and minds immortal, leav
The pow'r of Cupid, and enamour'd burn

“Thou also, Damon, (neither need I fear
That hope delusive) thou art also there,
For whither should simplicity like thine
Retire? where else such spotless virtue shine?
Thou dwellst not (thought profane) in shades below
Nor tears suit thee—cease then my tears to flow,
Away with grief! on Damon ill bestow'd!
Who, pure himself, has found a pure abode,
Has pass'd the show'ry arch, henceforth resides
With saints and heroes, and from flowing tides
Quaffs copious immortality, and joy,
With hallow'd lips!—Oh! blest without alloy,
And now enrich'd with all that faith can claim,
Look down, entreated by whatever name
If Damon please thee most (that rural sound
Shall oft with echoes fill the groves around),
Or if Diodatus, by which alone
In those ethereal mansions thou art known
Thy blush was maiden, and thy youth the taste
Of wedded bliss know never, pure and chaste,
The honours, therefore, by divine decree
The lot of virgin worth, are given to thee,
Thy brows encircled with a radiant band,
And the green palm-branch waving in thy hand,
Thou in immortal nuptials shalt rejoice,
And join with seraphs thy according voice,
Where rapture reigns, and the ecstatic lyre
Guides the blest organs of the blazing quire”

AN ODE

ADDRESS'D TO MR JOHN ROUSE, LIBRARIAN OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD ¹

ON A LOST VOLUME OF MY POEMS, WHICH HE DESIRED ME TO
REPLACE, THAT HE MIGHT ADD THEM TO MY OTHER WORKS
DEPOSITED IN THE LIBRARY

STROPHE.

My two-fold book! single in show,
But double in contents,
Neat, but not curiously adorn'd,
Which, in his early youth,
A poet gave, no lofty one in truth,
Although an earnest wooer of the Muse—
Say while in cool Ausonian shades
Or British wilds he roam'd,
Striking by turns his native lyre,
By turns the Daunian lute,
And stepp'd almost in air,—

ANTISTROPHE

Say, little book, what furtive hand
Thee from thy fellow-books convey'd,
What time at the repeated suit
Of my most learned friend,
I sent thee forth, an honour'd traveller,
From our great city to the source of Thames,
Cærulean sire!
Where rise the fountains, and the raptures ring,
Of the Aonian choir,
Durable as yonder spheres,
And through the endless lapse of years
Securo to be admir'd?

¹ This Ode is rendered without rhyme that it might more adequately represent the original, which, as Milton himself informs us, is of no certain measure. It may possibly for this reason disappoint the reader, though it cost the writer more labour than the translation of any other piece in the whole collection.—W C

STROPHE II

Now what god, or demigod,
 For Britain's ancient genius moved
 (If our afflicted land
 Have expiated at length the guilty sloth
 Of her degenerate sons)
 Shall terminate our impious feuds,
 And discipline, with hallow'd voice, recall
 Recall the Muses too,
 Driv'n from their ancient seats
 In Albion, and well nigh from Albion's shore,
 And with keen Phœbean shafts
 Piercing th' unseemly birds,
 Whose talons menace us,
 Shall drive the harpy race from Helicon afar?

ANTISTROPHE

But thou, my book, tho' thou hast stray'd
 Whether by treach'ry lost,
 Or indolent neglect, thy bearer's fault,
 From all thy kindred books,
 To some dark cell, or cave forlorn,
 Where thou endur'st, perhaps,
 The chafing of some hard untutor'd hand,
 Be comforted—
 For lo! again the splendid hope appears
 That thou mayst yet escape
 The gulfs of Lethe, and on oary wings
 Mount to the everlasting courts of Jove!

STROPHE III

Since Rouse desires thee, and complains
 That, though by promise his,
 Thou yet appear'st not in thy place
 Among the literary noble stores,
 Giv'n to his care,
 But absent, leav'st his numbers incomplete
 He, therefore, guardian vigilant
 Of that unperishing wealth,
 Calls thee to the interior shrine, his charge,
 Where he intends a richer treasure far
 Than Iön kept (Ion, Eretheus' son
 Illustrious, of the fair Creüsa born)
 In the resplendent temple of his god,
 Tripods of gold, and Delphic gifts divine

ANTISTROPHE

Haste, then, to the pleasant groves,
 The Muses' fav'rite haunt,
 Resume thy station in Apollo's dome.
 Dearer to him
 Than Delos, or the fork'd Parnassian hill!
 Exulting go,
 Since now a splendid lot is also thine,
 And thou art sought by my propitious friend,
 For there thou shalt be read
 With authors of exalted note,
 The ancient glorious lights of Greece and Rome

EPODE

Ye then, my works, no longer vain,
 And worthless deem'd by me!
 What'e'er this sterile genius has produc'd,
 Expect, at last, the rage of envy spent,
 An unmolested happy home,
 Gift of kind Hermes, and my watchful friend,
 Where never flippant tongue profane
 Shall entrance find,
 And whence the coarse unletter'd multitude
 Shall babble far remote
 Perhaps some future distant age,
 Less ting'd with prejudice, and better taught,
 Shall furnish minds of pow'r
 To judge more equally
 Then, malice silenc'd in the tomb,
 Cooler heads and sounder hearts,
 Thanks to Rouse, if aught of praise
 I merit shall with candour weigh the claim

TRANSLATIONS OF THE ITALIAN POEMS

SONNET

FAIR Lady! whose harmonious name the Rhine,
 Through all his grassy vale, delights to hear,
 Base were indeed the wretch, who could forbear
 To love a spirit elegant as thine,
 That manifests a sweetness all divine,
 Nor knows a thousand winning acts to spare,
 And graces, which Love's bow and arrows are,
 Temp'ring thy virtues to a softer shine
 When gracefully thou speakest, or singest gay,
 Such strains as might the senseless forest move,
 Ah then—turn each his eyes and ears away,
 Who feels himself unworthy of thy love!
 Grace can alone preserve him, ere the dart
 Of fond desire yet reach his inmost heart

SONNET

As on a hill-top rude, when closing day
 Imbrowns the scene, some past'ral maiden fair
 Waters a lovely foreign plant with care,
 Borne from its native genial air away,
 That scarcely can its tender bud display,
 So, on my tongue these accents new and rare,
 Are flowers exotic, which Love waters there,
 While thus, O sweetly scornful! I essay
 Thy praise, in verse to British ears unknown,
 And Thames exchange for Arno's fair domain
 So Love has willed, and oft-times Love has shown
 That what he wills, he never wills in vain
 Oh that this hard and sterile breast might be
 To Him, who plants from Heav'n, a soil as free!

CANZONE

Foxy mock my toil—the nymphs and am'rous swains—

And whence this fond attempt to write, they cry,
 Love songs in language that thou little know'st?
 How dar'st thou risk to sing these foreign strains?
 Say truly,—find'st not oft thy purpose cross'd,
 And that thy fairest flow'rs here fade and die?
 Then with pretence of admiration high—
 These other shores expect, and other tides,
 Rivers, on whose grassy sides
 Her deathless laurel leaf, with which to bind
 Thy flowing locks, already Fame provides,
 Why then this burthen, better far declined?

Speak, Muse! for me—The fair one said, who
 guides
 My willing heart and all my fancy's flights,
 "Thus is the language in which Love delights"

SONNET TO CHARLES DEODATI

CHARLES—And I say it wond'ring—thou must know
 That I, who once assum'd a scornful air,
 And scoff'd at Love, am fallen in his snare
 (Full many an upright man has fallen so)
 Yet think me not thus dazzled by the flow
 Of golden locks, or damask cheek, more rare
 The heartfelt beauties of my foreign fair,
 A mien majestic, with dark brows, that show
 The tranquil lustre of a lofty mind,
 Words exquisite, of idioms more than one,
 And song, whose fascinating pow'r might bind,
 And from her sphere draw down the lab'ring Moon
 With such fire darting eyes, that should I fill
 My ears with wax, she would enchant me still

SONNET.

LADY! it cannot be but that thine eyes
 Must be my sun, such radiance they display,
 And strike me ev'n as Phœbus him, whose way
 Through horrid Libya's sandy desert lies
 Meantime, on that side stormy vapours rise
 Where most I suffer Of what land are they,
 New as to me they are, I cannot say,
 But deem them, in the lover's language—sighs
 Some, though with pain, my bosom close conceals,
 Which, if in part escaping thence, they tend
 To soften thine, thy coldness soon congeals,
 While others to my tearful eyes ascend,
 Whence my sad nights in show'rs are ever drown'd,
 Till my Aurora comes, her brow with roses bound.

SONNET.

ENAMOUR'D, artless, young, on foreign ground,
 Uncertain whither from myself to fly,
 To thee, dear Lady, with an humble sigh
 Let me devote my heart, which I have found
 By certain proofs, not few, intrepid, sound,
 Good, and addicted to conceptions high
 When tempests shake the world, and fire the sky,
 It rests in adamant self wrapt around,
 As safe from envy, and from outrage rude,
 From hopes and fears, that vulgar minds abuse,
 As fond of genius, and fixt fortitude,
 Of the resounding lyre, and every Muse
 Weak you will find it in one only part,
 Now pierced by Love's immediate dart.

TRANSLATION FROM VIRGIL.

ÆNEID, BOOK VIII LINE 18

Thus Italy was moved—nor did the chief
 Æneas in his mind less tumult feel
 On every side his anxious thought he turns,
 Restless, unfixed, not knowing what to choose
 And as a cistern that in brass of brass
 Confines the crystal flood, if chance the sun
 Smite on it, or the moon's resplendent orb,
 The quivering light now flashes on the walls,
 Now leaps uncertain to the vaulted roof
 Such were the wavering motions of his mind
 'Twas night—and weary nature sunk to rest
 The birds, the bleating flocks were heard no more
 At length, on the cold ground, beneath the damp
 And dewy vault, fast by the river's brink,
 The father of his country sought repose
 When lo! among the spreading poplar boughs
 Forth from his pleasant stream, propitious rose
 The god of Tiber—clear transparent gauze
 Unfolds his loins, his brows with reeds are crown'd
 And these his gracious words to soothe his care:

'Heav'n-born, who bring'st our kindred home
 again,
 Rescued, and giv'st eternity to Troy,
 Long have Laurentum and the Latian plains
 Expected thee, behold thy fixt abode
 Fear not the tho' threats of war, the storm is pass'd,
 The gods appeased—For proof that what thou hear'st
 Is no vain forgery or delusive dream,
 Beneath the grove that borders my green bank,
 A milk-white swine, with thirty milk-white young,
 Shall greet thy wond'ring eyes—Mark well the place;
 For 'tis thy place of rest, there end thy toils
 There, twice ten years elaps'd, fair Alba's walls
 Shall rise, fair Alba, by Æscanius' hand
 Thus shall it be—now listen, while I teach
 The means to accomplish these events at hand
 Th' Arcadians here, a race from Pallas sprung,

Following Evander's standard and his fate,
 High on these mountains, a well chosen spot,
 Have built a city, for their grandsire's sake
 Named Pallanteum These perpetual war
 Wage with the Latians joined in faithful league
 And arms confed rate, add them to your camp
 Myself between your winding banks, will speed
 Your well oar'd barks to stem th' opposing tide
 Rise, goddess-born, arise and with the first
 Declining stars, seek Juno in thy pray'r,
 And vanquish all her wrath with suppliant vows
 When conquest crowns thee, then remember *Me*
 I am the Tiber, whose cerulean stream
 Heav'n favours, I with copious flood divide
 These grassy banks, and cleave the fruitful meads
 My mansion, this—and lofty cities crown
 My fountain head"—He spoke, and sought the deep,
 And plunged his form beneath the closing flood
 Æneis at the morning dawn awoke,
 And rising, with uplifted eye beheld
 The orient sun, then dipp'd his palms, and scoop'd
 The brimming stream, and thus address'd the skies.
 "Ye nymphs, Laurentian nymphs, who feed the source
 Of many a stream, and thou, with thy blest flood,
 O Tiber, hear, accept me, and afford,
 At length afford a shelter from my woes
 Where'er in secret cavern under ground
 Thy waters sleep, where'er they spring to light,
 Since thou hast pity for a wretch like me,
 My offerings and my vows shall wait thee still
 Great horned Father of Hesperian floods,
 Be gracious now, and ratify thy word"
 He said, and chose two galleys from his fleet,
 Fits them with oars, and clothes the crew in arms
 When lo! astonishing and pleasing sight,
 The milk-white dam, with her unspotted brood,
 Lay stretch'd upon the bank, beneath the grove
 To thee, the pious prince, Juno to thee
 Devotes them all, all on thine altar bleed
 That live long night old Tiber smooth'd his flood,
 And so restrain'd it, that it seem'd to stand
 Motionless as a pool or silent lake,
 That not a billow might resist their oars
 With cheerful sound of exhortation soon
 Their voyage they begin, the pitchy keel
 Slides through the gentle deep, the quiet stream

Admires th' unwonted burden that it bears
 Well polish'd arms, and vessels painted gay
 Beneath the shade of various trees, between
 Th' umbrageous branches of the spreading groves
 They cut their liquid way, nor day nor night
 They slack their course, unwinding as they go
 The long meanders of the peaceful tide

The glowing sun was in meridian height,
 When from afar they saw the humble walls,
 And the few scatter'd cottages, which now
 The Roman pow'r has equall'd with the clouds,
 But such was then Evander's scant domain
 They steer to shore, and hasten to the town

It chanced th' Arcadian monarch on that day,
 Before the walls, beneath a shady grove,
 Was celebrating high, in solemn feast,
 Alcides and his tutelary gods

Pallas, his son, was there, and there the chief
 Of all his youth, with these, a worthy tribe,
 His poor but venerable senate, burnt
 Sweet incense, and their altars smoked with blood
 Soon as they saw the towering masts approach,
 Shding between the trees, while the crew rest
 Upon their silent oars, amazed they rose,
 Not without fear, and all forsook the feast
 But Pallas undismay'd his jav'lin seiz'd,
 Rush'd to the bank, and from a rising ground
 Forbad them to disturb the sacred rites

"Ye stranger youth! What prompts you to explore
 This untried way? and whither do ye steer?"

Whence, and who are ye? Bring ye peace or war?"

Æneas from his lofty deck holds forth
 The peaceful olive branch, and thus replies

"Trojans and enemies to the Latian state,
 Whom they with unprovok'd hostilities
 Have driv'n away, thou see'st We seek Evander—
 Say this—and say beside, the Trojan chiefs
 Are come, and seek his friendship and his aid"
 Pallas with wonder heard that awful name,
 And "whosoe'er thou art," he cried, "come forth,
 Bear thine own tidings to my father's ear,
 And be a welcome guest beneath our roof"

He said, and press'd the stranger to his breast
 Then led him from the river to the grove,
 Where, courteous, thus Æneas greets the king
 "Best of the Grecian race, to whom I bow

(So wills my fortune) suppliant, and stretch forth
 In sign of amity this peaceful branch,
 I fear'd thee not, altho' I knew thee well
 A Grecian leader, born in Arcady,
 And kinsman of th' Atridae Me my virtue,
 That means no wrong to thee—the Oracles,
 Our kindred families allied of old,
 And thy renown diffused thro' ev'ry land,
 Have all conspired to bind in friendship to thee,
 And send me not unwilling to thy shores
 Dardanus, author of the Trojan state,
 (So say the Greeks) was fair Electra's son,
 Electra boasted Atlas for her sire,
 Whose shoulders high sustain th' ethereal orbs
 Your sire is Mercury, whom Maia bore,
 Sweet Maia, on Cyllene's hoary top
 Her, if we credit aught tradition old.
 Atlas of yore, the self same Atlas, claim'd
 His daughter Thus united close in blood.
 Thy race and ours one common sire confess
 With these credentials fraught, I would not send
 Ambassadors with artful phrase to sound
 And win thee by degrees—but came myself—
 Mo therefore, me thou seest, my life the stake
 'Tis I, Æneas, who implore thine aid
 Should Daunia, that now aims the blow at thee,
 Prevail to conquer us, nought then, they think,
 Will hinder, but Hesperia must be theirs,
 All theirs, from th' upper to the nether sea.
 Take then our friendship, and return us thine.
 We too have courage, we have noble minds,
 And youth well tried, and exercis'd in arms "

Thus spake Æneas —He with fixt regard
 Survey'd him speaking, features, form, and mien.
 Then briefly thus—" Thou noblest of thy name,
 How gladly do I take thee to my heart,
 How gladly thus confess thee for a friend!
 In thee I trace Anchises, his thy speech,
 Thy voice, thy count'nance For I well remember,
 Many a day since, when Priam journeyed forth
 To Salamis, to see the land where dwelt
 Hesione, his sister, he push'd on
 E'en to Arcadia's frozen bounds 'Twas then
 The bloom of youth was glowing on my cheek,
 Much I admir'd the Trojan chiefs, and much
 Their king, the son of great Laomedon,

But most Anchises, tow'ring o'er them all.
 A youthful longing seized me to accost
 The hero, and embrace him, I drew near,
 And gladly led him to the walls of Pheneus
 Departing, he distinguish'd me with gifts,
 A costly quiver stor'd with Lycian darts,
 A robe inwove with gold, with gold imboss'd,
 Two bridles, those which Pallas uses now
 The friendly league thou hast solicited
 I give thee therefore, and to morrow all
 My chosen youth shall wait on your return
 Meanwhile, since thus in friendship ye are come,
 Rejoice with us, and join to celebrate
 These annual rites, which may not be delay'd,
 And be at once familiar with our board "

He said, and bade replace the feast remov'd,
 Himself upon a grassy bank dispersed
 The crew, but for Æneas order'd forth
 A couch, spread with a lion's tawny shag,
 And bad him share the honours of his throne
 Th' appointed youth with glad alacrity
 Assist the lab'ring priest to load the board,
 With roasted entrails of the slaughter'd beesves,
 Well-kneaded bread, and manthng bowls Well pleas'd
 Æneas and the Trojan youth regale

On the huge length of a well-pastur'd chine
 Hunger appeas'd, and tables all dispatch'd,
 Thus spake Evander " Superstition here,
 In this our solemn feasting has no part
 No, Trojan friend, from utmost danger sav'd,
 In gratitude this worship we renew
 Behold that rock which nods above the vale,
 Those bulks of broken stone dispers'd around,
 How desolate the shatter'd cave appears,
 And what a ruin spreads th' encumber'd plain
 Within this pile, but far within, was once
 The den of Cacus, dire his hateful form,
 That shunn'd the day, half monster and half man
 Blood newly shed stream'd ever on the ground
 Smoking, and many a visage pale and wan
 Nail'd at his gate, hung hideous to the sight
 Vulcan begot the brute vast was his size,
 And from his throat he belch'd his father's fires
 But the day came that brought us what we wish'd
 Th' assistance and the presence of a god.
 Flush'd with his vict'ry and the spoils he won

From triple form'd Geryon, lately slain,
 The great avenger, Hercules appear'd
 Hither he drove his stately bulls, and pour'd
 His herds along the vale. But the sly thief
 Cacus, that nothing might escape his hand
 Of villany or fraud, drove from the stalls
 Four of the lordliest of his bulls, and four
 The fairest of his heifers, by the tail
 He dragg'd them to his den, that there conceal'd
 No footsteps might betray the dark abode
 And now his herd with provender sufficed,
 Alcides would be gone they as they went
 Still bellowing loud, made the deep echoing woods
 And distant hills resound when hark! one ox,
 Imprison'd close within the vast recess,
 Lows in return, and frustrates all his hope
 Then fury seiz'd Alcides, and his breast
 With indignation heav'd grasping his club
 Of knotted oak, swift to the mountain top
 He ran, he flew. Then first was Cacus seen
 To tremble, and his eyes bespoke his fears
 Swift as an eastern blast he sought his den,
 And dread increasing wing'd him as he went.
 Drawn up in iron slings above the gate
 A rock was hung enormous Such his haste,
 He burst the chains, and dropp'd it at the door,
 Then grappled it with ironwork within
 Of bolts and bars by Vulcan's art contrived
 Scarcely was he fast, when panting for revenge
 Came Hercules he gnash'd his teeth with rage,
 And quick as lightning glanced his eyes around
 In quest of entrance Very red and stung
 With indignation, thrice he wheel'd his course
 About the mountain, thrice, but thrice in vain
 He strove to force the quarry at the gate,
 And thrice sat down o'erwearied in the vale
 There stood a pointed rock, abrupt and rude,
 That high o'erlook'd the rest, close at the back
 Of the fell monster's den, where birds obscene
 Of ominous note resorted choughs and daws
 Thus, as it lean'd obliquely to the left,
 Threat'ning the streams below, he from the right
 Push'd with his utmost strength, and to and fro
 He shook the mass, loos'ning its lowest base,
 Then shored it from its seat, down fell the pile;
 Sky thunder'd at the fall, the banks gave way,

Th' affrighted stream flows upward to his source
Behold the kennel of the brute exposed,
The gloomy vault laid open So, if chance
Earth yawning to the centre should disclose
The mansions, the pale mansions of the dead,
Loath'd by the gods, such would the gulf appear,
And the ghosts tremble at the sight of day
The monster braying with unusual din
Within his hollow lair, and sore amazed
To see such sudden inroads of the light,
Aleides press'd him close with what at hand
Lay readiest, stumps of trees, and fragments huge
Of mill-stone size He, (for escape was none)
Wond'rous to tell! forth from his gorge discharg'd
A smoky cloud, that darken'd all the den,
Wreath after wreath he vomited amain
The smoth'ring vapour, mixt with fiery sparks
No sight could penetrate the veil obscure
The hero, more provoked, endur'd not this,
But with a headlong leap he rush'd to where
The thickest cloud envelop'd his abode
There grasp'd he Caeus, spite of all his fires,
Till crush'd within his arms, the monster shows
His bloodless throat, now dry with panting hard,
And his press'd eyeballs start Soon he tears down
The barricade of rock, the dark abyss
Lies open, and th' imprison'd bulls, the theft
He had with oaths denied, are brought to light,
By th' heels the miscreant carcase is dragg'd forth,
His face, his eyes, all terrible, his breast
Beset with bristles, and his sooty jaws
Are viewed with wonder never to be cloy'd.
Hence the celebrity thou seest, and hence
This festal day Potitius first enjoind
Posterity these solemn rites, he first
This altar built, deem'd sacred in the highest
By us, and sacred ever to be deem'd
Come then, my friends, and bind your youthful brows
In praise of such deliv'rance, and hold forth
The brimming cup, your deities and ours
Are now the same, then drink, and freely too
So saying, he twisted round his rev'rend locks
A variegated poplar wreath, and fill'd
His right hand with a consecrated bowl
At once all pour libations on the board,
All offer pray'r And now the radiant sphere

Of day descending, eventide drew near
 When first Potitius with the priests advanced,
 Begirt with skins, and torches in their hands
 High piled with meats of sav'ry taste, they ranged
 The chargers, and renewed the grateful feast
 Then came the Salii, crown'd with poplar too,
 Circling the blazing altars, here the youth
 Advanced, a choir harmonious, there were heard
 The rev'rend seers responsive, praise they sung,
 Much praise in honour of Alcides' deeds,
 How first with infant gripe, two serpents huge
 He strangled, sent from Juno, next they sung,
 How Troja and Oechalia he destroy'd,
 Fair cities both, and many a toilsome task
 Beneath Eurystheus, (so his step-dame will'd)
 Achiev'd victorious Thou, the cloud-born pair,
 Hylæus fierce and Pholus, monstrous twins,
 Thou slew'st, the minotaur, the plague of Crete,
 And the vast lion of the Nemean rock
 Thee Hell, and Cerberus, Hell's porter, fear'd,
 Stretch'd in his den upon his half-gnaw'd bones
 Thee no abhorred form, not ev'n the vast
 Typhæus could appal, tho' clad in arms
 Hail, true born son of Jove, among the gods
 At length enroll'd, nor least illustrious thou,
 Haste thee propitious, and approve our songs
 Thus hymn'd the chorus above all they sing
 The cave of Cacus, and the flames he breath'd.
 The whole grove echoes, and the hills rebound
 The rites perform'd, all hasten to the town
 The king, bending with age, held as he went
 Æneas and his Pallas by the hand,
 With much variety of pleasing talk
 Short'ning the way Æneas, with a smile,
 Looks round him, charm'd with the delightful scene
 And many a question asks, and much he learns
 Of heroes far renown'd in ancient times
 Then spake Evander These extensive groves
 Were once inhabited by fauns and nymphs
 Produced beneath their shades, and a rude race
 Of men, the progeny uncouth of elms
 And knotted oaks They no refinement knew
 Of laws or manners civilized, to yoke
 The steer, with forecast provident to store
 The hoarded grain, or manage what they had
 But browsed like beasts upon the leafy boughs,

Or fed voracious on their hunted prey
 An exile from Olympus, and expell'd
 His native realm by thunder-bearing Jove,
 First Saturn came He from the mountains drew
 This herd of men untractable and fierce,
 And gave them laws, and called his hiding-place
 This growth of forests, Latium Such the peace
 His land possess'd, the golden age was then,
 So famed in story, till by slow degrees
 Far other times, and of far different hue
 Succeeded, thirst of gold and thirst of blood
 Then came Ausonian bands, and armed hosts
 From Sicily, and Latium often changed
 Her master and her name At length arose
 Kings, of whom Tybris of gigantic form
 Was chief, and we Italians since have call'd
 The river by his name, thus Albula
 (So was the country called in ancient days)
 Was quite forgot Me from my native land
 An exile, thro' the dangerous ocean driv'n,
 Resistless fortune and relentless fate
 Placed where thou seest me Phœbus, and
 The nymph Carmentis, with maternal care
 Attendant on thy wand'rings, fixt me here.

[Ten lines omitted]

He said, and show'd him the Tarpeian rock,
 And the rude spot where now the capitol
 Stands all magnificent and bright with gold,
 Then overgrown with thorns And yet ev'n then,
 The swains beheld that sacred scene with awe,
 The grove, the rock, inspired religious fear
 This grove, he said, that crowns the lofty top
 Of this fair hill, some deity, we know,
 Inhabits, but what deity we doubt
 Th' Arcadians speak of Jupiter himself
 That they have often seen him, shaking here
 His gloomy ægis, while the thunder-storms
 Came rolling all around him Turn thine eyes,
 Behold that ruin, those dismantled walls,
 Where once two towns, Ianiculum—
 By Janus this, and that by Saturn built,
 Saturnia Such discourse brought them beneath
 The roof of poor Evander, thence they saw,

Where now the proud and stately forum stands,
 The grazing herds wide scatter'd o'er the field.
 Soon as he enter'd—Hereules, he said,
 Victorious Hereules, on this threshold trod,
 These walls contain'd him, humble as they are
 Dare to despise magnificence, my friend,
 Prove thy divine descent by worth divine,
 Nor view with haughty scorn this mean abode
 So saying he led Æneas by the hand,
 And placed him on a cushion stuff'd with leaves,
 Spread with the skin of a Lybistian bear

[*The episode of Teneus and Vulcan omitted*]

While thus in Lemnos Vulcan was employ'd,
 Awakened by the gentle dawn of day,
 And the shrill song of birds beneath the eaves
 Of his low mansion, old Evander rose
 His tunic, and the sandals on his feet,
 And his good sword well girded to his side,
 A panther's skin dependent from his left
 And over his right shoulder thrown aslant,
 Thus was he clad Two mastiffs follow'd him,
 His whole retinue and his nightly guard.

OVID TRIST LIB V ELEG XII

"Scribis, ut oblectum."

You bid me write t' amuse the tedious hours,
 And save from with'ring my poetic pow'rs
 Hard is the task, my friend, for verse should flow
 From the free mind, not fettered down by woe;
 Restless amidst unceasing tempests tost,
 Whe'er has cause for sorrow, I have most
 Would you bid Priam laugh, his sons all slain,
 Or childless Niobe from tears refrain,
 Join the gay dance, and lead the festive train?
 Does grief or study most besit the mind,
 To this remote, this barb'rous nook confin'd?
 Could you impart to my unshaken breast
 The fortitude by Socrates possess'd,
 Soon would it sink beneath such woes as mine,
 For what is human strength to wrath divine?

A part, perhaps, like this, escapes the doom,
 And though unworthy finds a friend at Rome,
 But oh the cruel art, that could undo
 It's vot'ry thus, would that could perish too!

HOR LIB I ODE IX

*"Vides, ut altâ stet nive candidum
 Soracte"*

SEEST thou yon mountain laden with deep snow,
 The groves beneath their fleecy burthen bow,
 The streams congeal'd forget to flow,
 Come, thaw the cold, and lay a cheerful pile
 Of fuel on the hearth,
 Broach the best cask, and make old winter smile
 With seasonable mirth

This be our part,—let Heaven dispose the rest,
 If Jove command, the winds shall sleep,
 That now wage war upon the foamy deep,
 And gentle gales spring from the balmy West
 E'en let us shift to-morrow as we may,
 When to-morrow's past away,
 We at least shall have to say,
 We have lived another day,
 Your auburn locks will soon be silver'd o'er,
 Old age is at our heels, and youth returns no more.

HOR LIB I ODE XXXVIII

"Persicos odi, puer, apparatus"

Boy, I hate their empty shows,
 Persian garlands I detest,
 Bring not me the late blown rose
 Long'ring after all the rest
 Plainer my rite pleases me
 Thus outstretched beneath my vine,
 Myrtle more becoming thee,
 Waiting with thy master's wine

HOR. B I ODE XXXVIII¹

Boy! I detest all Persian fopperies,
 Fillet-bound garlands are to me disgusting,
 Task not thyself with any search, I charge thee,
 Where latest roses linger

Bring me alone (for thou wilt find that readily)
 Plain myrtle Myrtle neither will disparage
 Thee occupied to serve me, or me drinking
 Beneath my vine's cool shelter

HOR. LIB II ODE XVI.

"Ollum Divos ro,at in patenti"

EASE is the weary merchant's pray'r,
 Who ploughs beneath th' Ægean flood,
 When neither moon nor stars appear,
 Or faintly glimmer through the cloud

For ease the Mede with quiver graced,
 For ease the Thracian hero sighs,
 Delightful ease all pant to taste,
 A blessing which no treasure buys.

For neither gold can lull to rest,
 Nor all a Consul's guard beat off
 The tumults of a troubled breast,
 The cares that haunt a gilded roof

Happy the man, whose table shows
 A few clean ounces of old plate,
 No fear intrudes on his repose,
 No sordid wishes to be great

Poor short-lived things, what plans we lay!
 Ah, why forsake our native home!
 To distant climates speed away,
 For self sticks close where'er we roam

¹ English Sapphics have been attempted, but with little success, because in our language we have no certain rules by which to determine the quantity. The following version was made merely in the way of experiment how far it might be possible to imitate a Latin Sapphic in English without any attention to that circumstance — W. C.

Care follows hard, and soon o'ertakes
 The well-rigg'd ship, the warlike steed,
 Her destined quarry ne'er forsakes,
 Not the wind flies with half her speed.

From anxious fears of future ill
 Guard well the cheerful, happy now,
 Gild e'en your sorrows with a smile,
 No blessing is unmix'd below

Thy neighing steeds and lowing herds,
 Thy num'rous flocks around thee graze,
 And the best purple Tyre affords
 Thy robe magnificent displays

On me indulgent Heav'n bestow'd
 A rural mansion, neat and small,
 This Lyre,—and as for yonder crowd,
 The happiness to hate them all

TRANSLATIONS FROM VINCENT BOURNE

THE THRACIAN

[We are informed by the Poet's kinsman, Mr. Johnson, that on the same day that Cowper began and finished "The Crut away," the Latin poems of Vincent Bourne were put before him, and he translated "The Thracian." The rendering of these verses is vigorous and musical, and casts no chill from the cloud that covered him. Indeed, during all this darkness of spirit, the poetical flame was burning bright behind it. The history of the human mind has no sadder or more wonderful page.]

THRACIAN parents, at his birth,
 Mourn their babe with many a tear,
 But with undissembled mirth
 Place him breathless on his bier

Greece and Rome with equal scorn,
 "O the savages!" exclaim,
 "Whether they rejoice or mourn,
 Well entitled to the name!"

But the cause of this concern,
 And this pleasure would they trace,
 Even they might somewhat learn
 From the savages of Thrace.

RECIPROCAL KINDNESS

THE PRIMARY LAW OF NATURE

ANDROCLES from his injured lord, in dread
 Of instant death, to Libya's desert fled.
 Tired with his toilsome flight, and parch'd with heat,
 He spied at length a cavern's cool retreat,
 But scarce had given to rest his weary frame,
 When, hugest of his kind, a lion came
 He roar'd approaching but the savage din
 To plaintive murmurs changed,—arrived within,
 And with expressive looks, his lifted paw
 Presenting, and implored from whom he saw
 The fugitive, through terror at a stand,
 Dared not awhile afford his trembling hand,
 But bolder grown, at length inherent found
 A pointed thorn, and drew it from the wound
 The cure was wrought, he wiped the sanious blood,
 And firm and free from pain the lion stood.
 Again he seeks the wilds, and day by day,
 Regales his inmate with the parted prey,
 Nor he disdains the dole, though unprepared,
 Spread on the ground, and with a lion shared.
 But thus to live—still lost—sequester'd still—
 Scarcely seem'd his lord's revenge a heavier ill.
 Home! native home! O might he but repair!
 He must—he will, though death attends him there
 He goes, and doom'd to perish, on the sands
 Of the full theatre unpitied stands,
 When lo! the self-same lion from his cage
 Flies to devour him, famish'd into rage
 He flies, but viewing in his purposed prey
 The man, his healer, pauses on his way,
 And soften'd by remembrance into sweet
 And kind composure, crouches at his feet
 Mute with astonishment th' assembly gaze
 But why, ye Romans? Whence your mute amaze?
 All this is nat'ral Nature bade him rend
 An enemy, she bids him spare a friend

A MANUAL

MORE ANCIENT THAN THE ART OF PRINTING, AND NOT
TO BE FOUND IN ANY CATALOGUE

THERE is a book, which we may call
(Its excellence is such)
Alone a library, though small,
The ladies thumb it much

Words none, things num'rous it contains:
And, things with words compared,
Who needs be told, that has his brains,
Which merit most regard?

Oftimes its leaves of scarlet hue
A golden edging boast,
And open'd, it displays to view
Twelve pages at the most

No name, nor title, stamp'd behind,
Adorns its outer part,
But all within 'tis richly lined,
A magazine of art

The whitest hands that secret hoard
Oft visit and the fair
Preserve it in their bosoms stored,
As with a miser's care

Thence implement of ev'ry size,
And form'd for various use,
(They need but to consult their eyes)
They readily produce

The largest and the longest kind
Possess the foremost page,
A sort most needed by the blind,
Or nearly such from age

The full charged leaf, which next ensues,
Presents in bright array
The smaller sort, which matrons use,
Not quite so blind as they

The third, the fourth, the fifth supply
What their occasions ask,
Who with a more discerning eye
Perform a nicer task.

But still with regular decrease
From size to size they fall,
In ev'ry leaf grow less and less,
The last are least of all

O! what a fund of genius, pent
In narrow space, is here!
This volume's method and intent
How luminous and clear!

It leaves no reader at a loss
Or posed, whoever reads
No commentator's tedious gloss,
Nor even index needs

Search Bodley's many thousands o'er!
No book is treasured there,
Nor yet in Granta's num'rous store,
That may with this compare,

No!—Rival none in either host
Of this was ever seen,
Or, that contents could justly boast,
So brilliant and so keen

AN ENIGMA

A NEEDLE small, as small can be,
In bulk and use, surpasses me,
Nor is my purchase dear,
For little, and almost for nought,
As many of my kind are bought
As days are in the year

Yet though but little use we boast,
And are procured at little cost,
The labour is not light,
Nor few artificers it asks,
All skilful in their sev'ral tasks,
To fashion us aright

One fuses metal o'er the fire,
 A second draws it into wire,
 The shears another plies,
 Who clips in lengths the brazen thread
 For him, who, chasing every shred,
 Gives all an equal size

A fifth prepares, exact and round,
 The knob, with which it must be crown'd,
 His follower makes it fast:
 And with his mallet and his file
 To shape the point, employs awhile
 The seventh and the last.

Now therefore, *Œdipus*! declare
 What creature, wonderful, and rare,
 A process, that obtains
 Its purpose with so much ado,
 At last produces!—tell me true,
 And take me for your pains!

SPARROWS SELF-DOMESTICATED IN TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

None ever shared the social feast,
 Or as inmate, or a guest,
 Beneath the celebrated dome,
 Where once Sir Isaac had his home,
 Who saw not (and with some delight
 Perhaps he view'd the novel sight)
 How numerous, at the tables there,
 The sparrows beg their daily fare
 For there, in every nook and cell,
 Where such a family may dwell,
 Sure as the vernal season comes
 Their nests they weave in hope of crumbs,
 Which kindly giv'n, may serve with food
 Convenient their unfather'd brood,
 And oft as with its summons clear
 The warning bell salutes their ear,
 Sagacious list'ners to the sound,
 They flock from all the fields around,
 To reach the hospitable hall,
 None more attentive to the call.

Arrived, the pensionary band,
Hopping and chirping, close at hand,
Solicit what they soon receive,
The sprinkled, plenteous donative
Thus is a multitude, though large,
Supported at a trivial charge,
A single doot would overpay
Th' expenditure of every day,
And who can grudge so small a grace
To supplants, natives of the place?

FAMILIARITY DANGEROUS

As in her ancient mistress' lap
The youthful tabby lay,
They gave each other many a tap,
Alike disposed to play

But strife ensues Puss waxes warm,
And with protruded claws
Ploughs all the length of Lydia's arm,
Mere wantonness the cause

At once, resentful of the deed,
She shakes her to the ground
With many a threat, that she shall bleed
With still a deeper wound.

But, Lydia, bid thy fury rest,
It was a venial stroke
For she that will with kittens jest,
Should bear a kitten's joke

INVITATION TO THE REDBREAST

SWEET bird, whom the winter constrains—
And seldom another it can—
To seek a retreat, while he reigns,
In the well shelter'd dwellings of man,

Who never can seem to intrude,
 Though in all places equally free,
 Come, oft as the season is rude,
 Thou art sure to be welcome to me

At sight of the first feeble ray,
 That pierces the clouds of the east,
 To inveigle thee every day
 My windows shall show thee a feast.
 For, taught by experience, I know,
 Thee mindful of benefit long,
 And that, thankful for all I bestow,
 Thou wilt pay me with many a song

Then, soon as the swell of the buds
 Bespeaks the renewal of spring,
 Fly hence, if thou wilt to the woods,
 Or where it shall please thee to sing
 And shouldst thou, compell'd by a frost,
 Come again to my window or door,
 Doubt not an affectionate host,
 Only pay, as thou pay'dst me before

Thus music must needs be confest
 To flow from a fountain above,
 Else how should it work in the breast
 Unchangeable friendship and love?
 And who on the globe can be found,
 Save your generation and ours,
 That can be delighted by sound,
 Or boasts any musical powers?

STRADA'S NIGHTINGALE

The shepherd touch'd his reed, sweet Philomel
 Essay'd, and oft essay'd to catch the strain,,
 And treasuring, as on her ear they fell,
 The numbers, echo'd note for note again.

The peevish youth, who ne'er had found before
 A rival of his skill, indignant heard,
 And soon (for various was his tuneful store)
 In loftier tones defied the simple bird.

She dared the task, and rising, as he rose,
With all the force that passion gives inspired,
Return'd the sounds awhile, but in the close
Exhausted fell, and at his feet expired.

Thus strength, not skill, prevail'd. O fatal strife,
By thee, poor songstress, playfully begun,
And O sad victory, which cost thy life,
And he may wish that he had never won!

ODE ON THE DEATH OF A LADY,

WHO LIVED ONE HUNDRED YEARS, AND DIED ON HER
BIRTHDAY, 1728

ANCIENT dame, how wide and vast,
To a race like ours appears,
Rounded to an orb at last,
All thy multitude of years!

We, the herd of human kind,
Frailer and of feebl'er pow'rs,
We, to narrow bounds confined,
Soon exhaust the sum of ours

Death's delicious banquet—wo
Perish even from the womb,
Swifter than a shadow flee,
Nourish'd but to feed the tomb

Seeds of merciless disease
Lurk in all that we enjoy;
Some, that waste us by degrees,
Some, that suddenly destroy

And if life o'erleap the bourn,
Common to the sons of men,
What remains, but that we mourn,
Dream, and doat, and drivel then!

Fast as moons can wax and wane,
Sorrow comes, and while we groan,
Pant with anguish and complain,
Half our years are fled and gone

If a few (to few 'tis giv'n),
 Ling'ring on this earthly stage,
 Creep, and halt with steps unev'n,
 To the period of an age,

Wherefore live they, but to see
 Cunning, arrogance, and force,
 Sights lamented much by thee,
 Holding their accustom'd course?

Oft was seen, in ages past,
 All that we with wonder view;
 Often shall be to the last
 Earth produces nothing new.

Thee we gratulate, content,
 Should propitious Heav'n design
 Life for us, as calmly spent,
 Though but half the length of thine.

THE CAUSE WON.

Two neighbours furiously dispute;
 A field—the subject of the suit
 Trivial the spot, yet such the rage
 With which the combatants engage,
 'Twere hard to tell, who covets most
 The prize—at whatsoever cost
 The pleadings swell. Words still suffice
 No single word but has its price
 No term but yields some fair pretence
 For novel and increas'd expense

Defendant thus becomes a name,
 Which he that bore it may disclaim,
 Since both, in one description blended,
 Are plaintiffs—when the suit is ended

THE SILKWORM

THE beams of April, ere it goes,
 A worm, scarce visible, disclose,
 All winter long content to dwell
 The tenant of his native shell
 The same prolific season gives
 The sustenance by which he lives,
 The mulb'rry-leaf, a simple store,
 That serves him—till he needs no more !
 For, his dimensions once complete,
 Thenceforth none ever sees him eat,
 Though, till his growing time be past,
 Scarce ever is he seen to fast
 That hour arrived, his work begins,
 He spins and weaves, and weaves and spins;
 Till circle upon circle, wound
 Careless around him and around,
 Conceals him with a veil, though slight,
 Impervious to the keenest sight
 Thus, self-inclosed, as in a cask,
 At length he finishes his task
 And, though a worm when he was lost,
 Or caterpillar at the most,
 When next we see him, wings he wears,
 And in papilio-pomp appears,
 Becomes oviparous, supplies
 With future worms and future flies,
 The next ensuing year,—and dies !
 Well were it for the world, if all
 Who creep about this earthly ball,
 Though shorter-lived than most he be,
 Were useful in their kind as he

THE INNOCENT THIEF.

Not a flow'r can be found in the fields,
 Or the spot that we till for our pleasure,
 From the largest to least, but it yields
 The bee, never wearied, a treasure

Scarce any she quits unexplor'd,
 With a diligence truly exact,
 Yet, steal what she may for her horrd,
 Leaves evidence none of the fact.

Her lucrative task she pursues,
 And pilfers with so much address,
 That none of their odour they lose,
 Nor charm by their beauty the less

Not thus inoffensively preys
 The canker-worm, indwelling foe!
 His voracity not thus allays
 The sparrow, the finch, or the crow

The worm, more expensively fed,
 The pride of the garden devours,
 And birds peck the seed from the bed,
 Still less to be spar'd than the flow'rs.

But she with such delicate skill,
 Her pillage so fits for her use,
 That the chemist in vain with his still
 Would labour the like to produce

Then grudge not her temperate meals,
 Nor a benefit blame as a theft,
 Since, stole she not all that she steals,
 Neither honey nor wax would be left

DENNER'S OLD WOMAN¹

In this mimic form of a matron in years,
 How plainly the pencil of Denner appears!
 The matron herself, in whose old age we see
 Not a trace of decline, what a wonder is she!
 No dimness of eye, and no cheek hanging low,
 No wrinkle, or deep furrow'd frown on the brow!
 Her forehead indeed is here circled around
 With locks like the ribbon with which they are bound
 While glossy and smooth, and as soft as the skin
 Of a delicate peach, is the down of her chin,

¹ This picture is, I believe, now in the Gallery at Dresden.

But nothing unpleasant, or sad or severe,
 Or that indicates life in its winter—is here
 Yet all is express'd, with fidelity due,
 Nor a pimple, or freckle, conceal'd from the view

Many fond of new sights or who cherish a taste
 For the labours of art, to the spectacle haste,
 The youths all agree that could old age inspire
 The passion of love, here would kindle the fire,
 And the matrons with pleasure confess that they see
 Ridiculous nothing, or hideous in thee
 The nymphs for themselves scarcely hope a decline,
 O wonderful woman! as placid as thine

Strange magic of art! which the youth can engage
 To peruse, half enamour'd, the features of age,
 And force from the virgin a sigh of despair,
 That she, when as old, shall be equally fair!
 How great is the glory that Denner has gain'd,
 Since Apollo's not more for his Venus obtain'd!

THE TEARS OF A PAINTER

ARTISTS, hearing that his boy
 Had just expired—his only joy!
 Although the sight with anguish tore him,
 Bide place his dear remains before him
 He seized his brush, his colours spread,
 And—"Oh! my child accept,"—he said,
 " ('Tis all that I can now bestow,)
 This tribute of a father's woe!"
 Then faithful to the two fold part,
 Both of his feelings and his art,
 He clos'd his eyes, with tender care,
 And form'd at once a fellow pair
 His brow with amber locks beset,
 And lips he drew, not livid yet,
 And shaded all that he had done
 To a just image of his son.

Thus far is well But view again
 The cause of thy paternal pain!
 Thy melancholy task fulfil!
 It needs the last, last touches still.

Again his pencil's powers he tries,
 For on his lips a smile he spies
 And still his cheek unfaded shows
 The deepest damask of the rose
 Then, heedful to the finish'd whole,
 With fondest eagerness he stole,
 Till scarce himself distinctly knew
 The cherub copied from the true

Now, painter, cease ! Thy task is done.
 Long lives this image of thy son,
 Nor short-liv'd shall thy glory prove,
 Or of thy labour, or thy love

THE MAZE

FROM right to left and to and fro,
 Caught in a labyrinth, you go,
 And turn, and turn, and turn again,
 To solve the myst'ry, but in vain,
 Stand still and breathe, and take from me
 A clue, that soon shall set you free !
 Not Ariadne, if you met her,
 Herself could serve you with a better
 You entered easily—find where—
 And make, with ease, your exit there !

NO SORROW PECULIAR TO THE SUFFERER.

THE lover, in melodious verses,
 His singular distress rehearses,
 Still closing with a rueful cry,
 " Was ever such a wretch as I ?"
 Yes ! thousands have endured before
 All thy distress, some, haply more
 Unnumber'd Corydons complain,
 And Strephons, of the like disdain :
 And if thy Chloe be of steel,
 Too deaf to hear, too hard to feel ;
 Not her alone that censure fits,
 Nor thou alone hast lost thy wits.

THE SNAIL

To grass, or leaf, or fruit, or wall,
The snail sticks close, nor fears to fall,
As if he grew there, house and all
Together.

Within that house secure he lides,
When danger imminent betides
Of storm, or other harm besides
Of weather

Give but his horns the slightest touch,
His self collecting power is such,
He shrinks into his house with much
Displeasure

Where'er he dwells, he dwells alone,
Except himself has chattels none,
Well satisfied to be his own
Whole treasure,

Thus, hermit-like, his life he leads,
Nor partner of his banquet needs,
And if he meets one, only feeds
The faster

Who seeks him must be worse than blind,
(He and his house are so combined)
If, finding it, he fails to find
Its master

THE CANTAB

With two spurs or one, and no great matter which,
Boots bought, or boots borrow'd, a whip or a switch,
Five shillings or less for the hire of his beast,
Paid part into hand,—you must wait for the rest
Thus equipt, Academicus climbs up his horse,
And out they both sally for better or worse ,
o o 2

His heart void of fear, and as light as a feather
 And in violent haste to go not knowing whither
 Through the fields and the towns, (see!) he scampers
 along,
 And is look'd at, and laugh'd at, by old and by young
 Till at length overspent, and his sides smear'd with
 blood,
 Down tumbles his horse, man and all in the mud
 In a waggon or chaise shall he finish his route?
 Oh! scandalous fate! he must do it on foot

Young gentlemen, hear!—I am older than you!
 The advice that I give, I have proved to be true.
 Wherever your journey may be, never doubt it,
 The faster you ride, you're the longer about it.

THE SALAD.

BY VIRGIL¹.

THE winter-night now well nigh worn away,
 The wakeful cock proclaim'd approaching day,
 When Simulus, poor tenant of a farm
 Of narrowest limits, heard the shrill alarm,
 Yawn'd, stretch'd his limbs, and anxious to provide
 Against the pangs of hunger unsupplied,
 By slow degrees his tatter'd bed forsook,
 And poking in the dark explored the nook,
 Where embers slept with ashes heap'd around,
 And with burnt fingers ends the treasure found

It chanced that from a brand beneath his nose,
 Sure proof of latent fire, some smoke arose,
 When, trimming with a pin th' incrust'd tow,
 And stooping it towards the coals below,
 He toils, with cheeks distended, to excite
 The ling'ring flame, and gains at length a light;
 With prudent heed he spreads his hand before
 The quiv'ring lamp, and opes his gran'ry door

¹ Translated June 8 1799 when the sufferings of Cowper were most deep and fearful. Hayley remarks that, "To those who are used to philosophize on the powers of the human mind under affliction, this production will appear a highly interesting curiosity." The diction, in several places, is choice and happy.

Small was his stock, but taking for the day
 A measured stint of twice eight pounds away,
 With these his mill he seeks A shelf at hand,
 Fixt in the wall, affords his lamp a stand
 Then, baring both his arms, a sleeveless coat
 He girds, the rough exuvium of a goat,
 And with a rubber, for that use design'd,
 Cleansing his mill within—begins to grind,
 Each hand has its employ, lab'ring amain,
 This turns the winch, while that supplies the grain.
 The stone, revolving rapidly, now glows,
 And the bruised corn a mealy current flows,
 While he, to make his heavy labour light,
 Tasks oft his left hand to relieve his right,
 And chants with rudest accent, to beguile
 His ceaseless toil, as rude a strain the while
 And now, "Dame Cybale, come forth!" he cries,
 But Cybale, still slumb'ring, nought replies

From Afric she, the swain's sole serving-maid,
 Whose face and form alike her birth betray'd
 With woolly locks, lips tumid, sable skin,
 Wide bosom, udders flaccid, belly thin,
 Legs slender, broad and most misshapen feet,
 Chapp'd into chinks, and parch'd with solar heat,—
 Such, summon'd oft, she came, at his command
 Fresh fuel heap'd, the sleeping embers fann'd,
 And made in haste her simm'ring skillet steam,
 Replenish'd newly from the neighbouring stream.

The labours of the mill perform'd, a sieve
 The mingled flow and bran must next receive,
 Which, shaken oft, shoots Ceres through refined,
 And better dress'd, her husks all left behind.
 This done, at once, his future plain repast,
 Unleaven'd, on a shaven board he cast,
 With tepid lymph first largely soak'd it all,
 Then gather'd it with both hands to a ball,
 And spreading it again with both hands wide
 With sprinkled salt the stiffen'd mass supplied,
 At length, the stubborn substance, duly wrought,
 Takes from his palms impress'd the shape it ought,
 Becomes an orb—and quarter'd into shares,
 The faithful mark of just division bears
 Last, on his hearth it finds convenient space,
 For Cybale before had swept the place,

And there, with tiles and embers overspread,
She leaves it—reeking in its sultry bed.

Nor Simulus, while Vulcan thus alone
His part perform'd, proves heedless of his own.
But sedulous, not merely to subdue
His hunger, but to please his palate too,
Prepares more sav'ry food His chimney-side
Could boast no gammon, salted well, and dried,
And hook'd behind him, but sufficient store
Of bundled anise, and a cheese it bore,
A broad round cheese, which, through its centre
strung
With a tough broom-twig in the corner hung
The prudent hero therefore with address,
And quick dispatch, now seeks another mess

Close to his cottage lay a garden-ground,
With reeds and osiers sparely girt around,
Small was the spot, but lib'ral to produce,
Nor wanted aught that serves a peasant's use,
And sometimes ev'n the rich would borrow thence,
Although its tillage was his sole expense
For oft, as from his toils abroad he ceased,
Home bound by weather, or some stated feast,
His debt of culture here he duly paid,
And only left the plough to wield the spade
He knew to give each plant the soil it needs,
To drill the ground, and cover close the seeds,
And could with ease compel the wanton rill
'To turn, and wind, obedient to his will.
There flourish'd star-wort, and the branching beet,
The sorrel acid, and the mallow sweet,
The skirret, and the leek's aspiring kind,
The noxious poppy—quencher of the mind!
Salubrious sequel of a sumptuous board,
The lettuce, and the long huge-bellied gourd;
But these (for none his appetite controll'd
With stricter sway) the thrifty rustic sold,
With broom-twigs neatly bound, each kind apart,
He bore them ever to the public mart
Whence, laden still, but with a lighter load
Of cash well-earn'd, he took his homeward road,
Expending seldom, ere he quitted Rome,
His gains in flesh-meat for a feast at home
There, at no cost, on onions rank and red,

Or the curl'd endive's bitter leaf, he fed
 On scallions sliced, or with a sensual gust,
 On rockets—foul provocatives of lust!
 Nor even shunn'd, with smarting gums, to press
 Nasturtium—pungent, face-distorting mess!

Some such regale now also in his thought,
 With hasty steps his garden ground he sought,
 There delving with his hands, he first displaced
 Four plants of garlick, large, and rooted fast,
 The tender tops of parsley next he culls,
 Then the old rue-bush shudders as he pulls,
 And coriander last to these succeeds,
 That hangs on slightest threads her trembling seeds

Placed near his sprightly fire, he now demands
 The mortar at his sable servant's hands,
 When stripping all his garlick first, he tore
 Th' exterior coats, and cast them on the floor,
 Then cast away, with like contempt the skin,
 Flimsier concealment of the cloves within
 These search'd, and perfect found, he one by one
 Rinsed, and disposed within the hollow stone
 Salt added, and a lump of salted cheese,
 With his injected herbs he covered these,
 And tucking with his left his tunic tight,
 And seizing fast the pestle with his right,
 The garlick bruising first he soon express'd,
 And mix'd the various juices of the rest
 He grinds, and by degrees his herbs below
 Lost in each other their own pow'rs forego,
 And with the cheese in compound, to the sight
 Nor wholly green appear, nor wholly white
 His nostrils oft the forceful fume resent,
 He cursed full oft his dinner for its scent,
 Or with wry faces, wiping as he spoke
 The trickling tears, cried—"Vengeance on the
 smoke!"

The work proceeds not roughly turns he now
 The pestle, but in circles smooth and slow,
 With cautious hand, that grudges what it spills,
 Some drops of olive-oil he next instils,
 Then vinegar with caution scarcely less,
 And gathering to a ball the medley mess,
 Last, with two fingers frugally applied,
 Sweeps the small remnant from the mortar's side

And thus complete in figure and in kind,
Obtains at length the salad he design'd

And now black Cybale before him stands,
The cake drawn newly glowing in her hands;
He glad receives it, chasing far away
All fears of famine for the passing day,
His legs enclosed in buskins, and his head
In its tough casque of leather, forth he led
And yoked his steers, a dull obedient pair,
Then drove afield, and plunged the pointed share.

TRANSLATIONS OF GREEK VERSES

BEGUN AUGUST, 1799

FROM THE GREEK OF JULLANUS.

A SPARTAN, his companions slain,
Alone from battle fled,
His mother, kindling with disdain
That she had borne him, struck him dead;

For courage, and not birth alone,
In Sparta testifies a son!

ON THE SAME, BY PALLAADAS.

A SPARTAN, 'scaping from the fight,
His mother met him in his flight,
Upheld a falchion to his breast,
And thus the fugitive address'd

"Thou canst but live to blot with shame
Indelible thy mother's name,
While ev'ry breath that thou shalt draw,
Offends against thy country's law,
But if thou perish by this hand,
Myself indeed throughout the land,

To my dishonour, shall be known
The mother, still of such a son,
But Sparta will be safe and free,
And that shall serve to comfort me "

AN EPITAPH

My name—my country—what are they to thee?
What, whether base or proud, my pedigree?
Perhaps I far surpass'd all other men—
Perhaps I fell below them all—what then?
Suffice it, Stranger! that thou seest a tomb—
Thou know'st its use—it hides no matter whom

ANOTHER

TAKE to thy bosom, gentle earth, a swain
With much hard labour in thy service worn!
He set the vines that clothe yon ample plain,
And he these olives that the vale adorn

He fill'd with grain the glebe, the rills he led
Through this green herbage, and those fruitful bow'rs;
Thou, therefore, earth! lie lightly on his head,
His hoary head, and deck his grave with flow'rs

ANOTHER

PAINTER, this likeness is too strong,
And we shall mourn the dead too long

ANOTHER

At threescore winters' end I died
A cheerless being, sole and sad;
The nuptial knot I never tied
And wish my father never had.

BY CALLIMACHUS.

At morn we placed on his fanereal bier
 Young Melanippus, and at eventide,
 Unable to sustain a loss so dear,
 By her own hand his blooming sister died

Thus Aristippus mourn'd his noble race,
 Annihilated by a double blow,
 Nor son could hope, nor daughter more t' embrace,
 And all Cyrene sadden'd at his woe.

ON MILTIADES

MILTIADES! thy valour best
 (Although in every region known)
 The men of Persia can attest,
 Taught by thyself at Marathon

ON AN INFANT

BEWAIL not much, my parents! me, the prey
 Of ruthless Ades, and sepulchred here,
 An infant, in my fifth scarce finish'd year
 He found all sportive, innocent, and gay,
 Your young Callimachus, and if I knew
 Not many joys, my griefs were also few

BY HERACLIDES

IN Cnidus born, the consort I became
 Of Euphron. Aretimias was my name,
 His bed I shar'd, nor prov'd a barren bride,
 But bore two children at a birth, and died
 One child I leave to solace and uphold
 Euphron hereafter, when infirm and old,
 And one, for his remembrance sake, I bear
 To Pluto's realm, till he shall join me there

ON THE REED.

I WAS of late a barren plant,
 Useless, insignificant,
 Nor fig, nor gripe, nor apple bore,
 A native of the marshy shore,
 But gather'd for poetic use,
 And plung'd into a sable juice,
 Of which my modicum I sip,
 With narrow mouth and slender lip,
 At once, although by nature dumb,
 All eloquent I have become,
 And speak with fluency untired,
 As if by Phœbus' self inspired

TO HEALTH.

ELDEST born of pow'rs divine
 Blest Hygeia! be it mine
 To enjoy what thou canst give,
 And henceforth with thee to live:
 For in pow'r if pleasure be,
 Wealth, or numerous progeny,
 Or in amorous embrace,
 Where no spy infests the place
 Or in aught that Heav'n bestows,
 To alleviate human woes,
 When the wearied heart despairs
 Of a respite from its cares,
 These and ev'ry true delight
 Flourish only in thy sight,
 And the sister Graces Three
 Owe, themselves, their youth to thee,
 Without whom we may possess
 Much, but never happiness

ON THE ASTROLOGERS

TH' Astrologers did all alike presage
 My uncle's dying in extreme old age,
 One only disagreed But he was wise,
 And spoke not, till he heard the fun'ral cries.

ON AN OLD WOMAN

MYOILLA dyes her locks 'tis said,
 But 'tis a foul aspersion,
 She buys them black, they therefore need
 No subsequent immersion

ON INVALIDS

FAR happier are the dead, methinks, than they
 Who look for death, and fear it ev'ry day

ON FLATTERERS

No mischief worthier of our fear
 In nature can be found,
 Than friendship, in ostent sincere,
 But hollow and unsound.
 For lull'd into a dangerous dream
 We close enfold a foe,
 Who strikes, when most secure we seer,
 Th' inevitable blow

ON THE SWALLOW

ARRIO maid' with honey fed,
 Bear'st thou to thy callow brood
 Yonder locust from the mead,
 Destin'd their delicious food!

Ye have kindred voices clear,
 Ye alike unfold the wing,
 Migrate hither, sojourn here,
 Both attendant on the spring!

Ah, for pity drop the prize!
 Let it not, with truth, be said,
 That a songster gasps and dies,
 That a songster may be fed.

ON LATE ACQUIRED WEALTH

Poor in my youth, and in life's later scenes
 Rich to no end, I curse my natal hour
 Who nought enjoy'd while young, denied the means;
 And nought, when old, enjoy'd, denied the pow'r

ON A TRUE FRIEND.

Hast thou a friend? Thou hast indeed
 A rich and large supply,
 Treasure to serve your every need,
 Well manag'd till you die

ON A BATH, BY PLATO.

DID Cythera to the skies
 From this pellucid lymph arise?
 Or was it Cythera's touch,
 When bathing here, that made it such?

ON A FOWLER, BY ISIODORIUS

With seeds and birdlime, from the desert air,
 Eumelus gather'd free, though scanty, fare
 No lordly patron's hand he deign'd to kiss,
 Nor lux'ry knew, save liberty, nor bliss
 Thrice thirty years he liv'd, and to his heirs
 His seeds bequeath'd, his birdlime, and his snares.

ON NIOBE

CHARON! receive a family on board,
 Itself sufficient for thy crazy yawl
 Apello and Diana, for a word,
 By me too proudly spoken, slew us all.

ON A GOOD MAN

TRAV'LLER, regret not me, for thou shalt find
 Just cause of sorrow none in my decease,
 Who, dying, children's children left behind,
 And with one wife liv'd many a year in peace:
 Three virtuous youths espous'd my daughters three,
 And oft their infants in my bosom lay,
 Nor saw I one, of all deriv'd from me,
 Touch'd with disease, or torn by death away.
 Their dutious hands my fun'ral rites bestow'd,
 And me, by blameless manners fitted well
 To seek it, sent to the serene abode,
 Where shades of pious men for ever dwell.

ON A MISER

THEY call thee rich—I deem thee poor,
 Since, if thou dar'st not use thy store,
 But sav'st it only for thine heirs,
 The treasure is not thine, but theirs

ANOTHER.

A MISER, traversing his house,
 Espied, unusual there, a mouse,
 And thus his uninvited guest,
 Briskly inquisitive, address'd
 "Tell me, my dear, to what cause is it
 I owe this unexpected visit?"
 The mouse her host obliquely ey'd,
 And smiling, pleasantly replied.
 "Fear not, good fellow, for your hoard!
 I come to lodge, and not to board"

ANOTHER.

Art thou come in I - deal of a kind
 Long-hy'd by nature as the rook or hind?
 Heap treasure then, for if thy need be such,
 Thou hast excuse, or I scarce exist heap too much.
 But men thou scorn'st, dear thou'st from thy breast
 The lust of treasure—folly at the best!
 For why should'st thou go wast'd to the tomb,
 To fatten with thy spoils thou know'st not whom?

ON FEMALE INCONSTANCY.

RICH, thou hadst many lovers—poor, hast none,
 So surely wast extr'nal has the same,
 And she, who call'd thee once her pretty one,
 And her Adonis, now inquire thy name.

Where wast thou born Socrates, and where
 In what strange country can thy parents live,
 Who seem'd, by thy ex'plants, not yet aware,
 That wast' a crime no woman can forgive?

ON THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY songster, perch'd above,
 On the summit of the grove,
 Whom a dew-drop cheers to sing
 With the freedom of a king.
 From thy perch survey the fields
 Where promise nature yields
 Nought it is at, willingly as she,
 Man surrenders not to thee.
 For hostility or hate
 None thy pleasures can create.
 Thee it eases to sing
 Sweetly the return of spring.
 Herald of the genial hours,
 Harming neither herbs nor flowers

Therefore man thy voice attends
 Gladly—thou and he are friends;
 Nor thy never-ceasing strains
 Phœbus, or the Muse, disdains,
 As too simple or too long,
 For themselves inspire the song.
 Earth-born, bloodless, undecaying.
 Ever singing, sporting, playing,
 What has nature else to show
 Godlike in its kind as thou?

ON HERMOCRATIA.

HERMOCRATIA nam'd—save only one—
 Twice fifteen births I bore, and buried none
 For neither Phœbus pierc'd my thriving joy
 Nor Dian—she my girls, or he my boys
 But Dian rather, when my daughters lay
 In parturition, chas'd their pangs away
 And all my sons, by Phœbus' bounty, shar'd
 A vig'rous youth, by sickness unimpair'd.
 O Niobe! far less prolific! see
 Thy boast against Latona sham'd by me!

FROM MENANDER.

Fond youth! who dream'st, that hoarded
 Is needful, not alone to pay
 For all thy various items sold,
 To serve the wants of every day,
 Bread, vinegar, and oil, and meat,
 For sav'ry viands season'd high,
 But somewhat more important yet—
 I tell thee what it cannot buy

No treasure, hadst thou more amass'd
 Than fame to Tantalus assign'd,
 Would save thee from a tomb at last.
 But thou must leave it all behind

I give thee, therefore, counsel wise,
Confide not vainly in thy store,
However large—much less despise
Others comparatively poor,

But in thy more exalted state
A just and equal temper show,
That all who see thee rich and great
May deem thee worthy to be so

ON PALLAS BATHING

FROM A HYMN OF CALLIMACHUS.

NOR oils of balmy scent produce,
Nor mirror for Minerva's use,
Ye nymphs who lave her, she, array'd
In genuine beauty, scorns their aid
Not even when they left the skies
To seek on Ida's head the prize
From Paris' hand, did Juno deign,
Or Pallas in the crystal plain
Of Simois' stream her locks to trace,
Or in the mirror's polish'd face,
Though Venus oft with anxious care
Adjusted twice a single hair

TO DEMOSTHENES

It flatters and deceives thy view,
This mirror of ill-polish'd ore,
For were it just, and told thee true,
Thou wouldst consult it never more.

ON A SIMILAR CHARACTER

You give your cheeks a rosy stain,
With washes dye your hair,
But paint and washes both are vain
To give a youthful air

Those wrinkles mock your daily toil,
 No labour will efface 'em,
 You wear a mask of smoothest oil,
 Yet still with ease we trace 'em.

An art so fruitless then forsake,
 Which though you much excel in,
 You never can contrive to make
 Old Hecuba young Helen

ON AN UGLY FELLOW

BEWARE, my friend ' of crystal brook,
 Or fountain, lest that hideous hook,
 Thy nose, thou chance to see,
 Narcissus' fate would 'hen be thine,
 And self-detested thou wouldst pine,
 As self-enamour'd he

ON A BATTERED BEAUTY

HAIR, wax, rouge, honey, teeth, you buy,
 A multifarious store '
 A mask at once would all supply,
 Nor would it cost you more

ON A THIEF.

WHEN Aulus, the nocturnal thief, made prize
 Of Hermes, swift-wing'd envoy of the skies,
 Hermes, Arcadia's king, the thief divine,
 Who when an infant stole Apollo's kine,
 And whom, as arbiter and overseer
 Of our gymnastic sports, we planted here,
 "Hermes," he cried, "you meet no new disaster;
 Oftimes the pupil goes beyond his master "

ON PEDIGREE

FROM EPICHRMUS

MY mother! if thou love me, name no more
 My noble birth! Sounding at every breath
 My noble birth, thou kill'st me Thither fly,
 As to their only refuge, all from whom
 Nature withholds all good besides, they boast
 Their noble birth, conduct us to the tombs
 Of their forefathers, and from age to age
 Ascending, trumpet their illustrious race
 But whom hast thou beheld, or canst thou name
 Derived from no forefather? Such a man
 Lives not, for how could such be born at all?
 And if it chance, that native of a land
 Far distant, or in infancy deprived
 Of all his kindred, one, who *cannot* trace
 His origin, exist, why deem him sprung
 From baser ancestry than theirs, who *can*?
 My mother! he, whom nature at his birth
 Endow'd with virtuous qualities, although
 An Æthiop and a slave, is nobly born

ON ENVY.

PITY, says the Theban bard,
 From my wishes I discard,
 Envy, let me rather be,
 Rather far, a theme for thee!
 Pity to distress is shown,
 Envy to the great alone—
 So the Theban—But to shine
 Less conspicuous be mine!
 I prefer the golden mean
 Pomp and penury between
 For alarm and peril wait
 Ever on the loftiest state,
 And the lowest, to the end
 Obloquy and scorn attend

BY PHILEMON.

Oft we enhance our ills by discontent,
 And give them bulk, beyond what nature meant.
 A parent, brother, friend deceased to cry—
 "He's dead indeed, but he was born to die"—
 Such temperate grief is suited to the size
 And burthen of the loss, is just and wise
 But to exclaim—"Ah! wherefore was I born,
 "Thus to be left, for ever thus forlorn?"
 Who thus laments his loss, invites distress,
 And magnifies a woe that might be less,
 Through dull despondence to his lot resign'd,
 And leaving reason's remedy behind

BY MOSCHUS

I SLEPT, when Venus enter'd to my bed
 A Cupid in her beauteous hand she led,
 A bashful seeming boy, and thus she said
 "Shepherd, receive my little one! I bring
 An untaught love, whom thou must teach to sing."
 She said, and left him I suspecting nought,
 Many a sweet strain my subtle pupil taught,
 How reed to reed Pan first with osier bound,
 How Pallas form'd the pipe of softest sound,
 How Hermes gave the lute, and how the quire
 Of Phœbus owe to Phœbus' self the lyre
 Such were my themes, my themes nought heeded he
 But ditties sang of am'rous sort to me,
 The pangs that mortals and immortals prove
 From Venus' influence, and the darts of love.
 Thus was the teacher by the pupil taught,
 His lessons I retain'd, and mine forgot

EPIGRAMS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF OWEN

IN IGNORANTEM ARROGANTEM LINUM

CAPTIVUM, Line, te tenet ignorantia duplex
Scis nihil, et nescis te quoque scire nihil

ON ONE IGNORANT AND ARROGANT.

THOU mayst of double ign'rance boast,
Who know'st not that thou nothing know'st

PRUDENS SIMPLICITAS

UT nulli nocuisse velis, imitare columbam
Serpentem, ut possit nemo nocere tibi

PRUDENT SIMPLICITY

THAT thou mayst injure no man, dove like be,
And serpent like, that none may injure thee!

AD AMICUM PAUPEREM.

EST male nunc? Utinam in pejus sors omnia vertat
Succedunt summis optima sæpe malis

TO A FRIEND IN DISTRESS

I WISH thy lot, now bad, still worse, my friend,
For when at worst, they say, things always mend.

OMNIA me dum junior essem, scire putabam
Quo scio plus, nec me nunc scio scire minus

COWPER

When little more than boy in age,
 I deem'd myself almost a sage;
 But now seem worthier to be styled,
 For ignorance—almost a child.

LEX TALIONIS

MAJOREM nunquam, Aule, legis monumenta tuorum
 Minus est, posteritas si tua scripta legat

RETALIATION

THE works of ancient birds divine,
 Aulus, thou scorn'st to read,
 And should posterity read thine,
 It would be strange indeed!

DE ORTU ET OCCASU.

SOLE oriente, tui reditus a morte memento!
 Sis memor occasus, sole cadente, tui!

SUNSET AND SUNRISE

CONTEMPLATE, when the sun declines,
 Thy death, with deep reflection!
 And when again he rising shines,
 Thy day of resurrection!

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FABLES OF GAY

LEPUS MULTIS AMICIS

[These translations were composed in January, 1800, scarcely three months before the death of the Poet. While he was engaged on the first fable — "The Hare and many Friends" — he exclaimed, "O that I could recall the days when I could repeat all this fable by heart, when I used to be called upon to do so for the amusement of company!" Hayley was led by the freedom and spirit of these translations to print not only those which were left finished, but even a fragment of two verses, being the commencement of another fable.]

Lusus amicitia est, uni nisi dedita, ceu fit,
 Simplice ni nexus fœdere, lusus amor
 Incerto genitore puer, non sæpe paternæ
 Tutamen novit, deliciasque domûs
 Quique sibi fidos fore multos sperat, amicus
 Mirum est huic misero si ferat ullus opem

Comis erat, mitisque, et nolle et velle paratus
 Cum quovis, Gau more modoque, Lepus
 Ille, quot in sylvis, et quot spatiantur in agris
 Quadrupedes, nârat conciliare sibi,
 Et quisque innocuo, invitoque lacerare quenquam
 Labra tenus saltem fidus amicus erat
 Ortum sub lucis dum pressa cubilia linqvit,
 Rorantes herbas, pabula sucta, petens,
 Venatorum audit clangores pondè sequentum,
 Fulmineumque sonum territus erro fugit
 Corda pavor pulsât, sursum sedet, erigit aures,
 Respicit, et sentit jam prope adesse necem
 Utque canes fallat latè circumvagus, illuc,
 Unde abut, mirâ calliditate redit,
 Viribus at fractis tandem se projicit ultro
 In mediâ miserum semianimemque viâ
 Vix ibi stratus, equi sonitum pedis audit, et, oh spe
 Quam lætâ adventu cor agitur equi!
 Dorsum (inquit) mihi, charo, tuum concede, tuoque
 Auxilio nares fallere, vinctque canum

Lata silenter humi ponit vestigia, quemque
 Respicit ad sonitum respiciensque tremuit,
 Angustissima quæque foramina lampade visit,
 Ad vices, obices, fertque refertque manum.
 Deum reserat crebris junctam compagibus arcam
 Exultansque omnes conspiciat intus opes
 Sed tandem furus ultimebus actus ob artes
 Quæ sua res tenuis creverat in eumulum
 Contortis manibus nunc stat, nunc pectora pulsans
 Aurum execratur, perniciemque vocat,
 O mihi, ait, misero mens quam tranquilla fuisset,
 Hoc celasset adhuc si modo terra malum!
 Nunc autem virtus ipsa est venalis, et aurum
 Quid contra vitii tormina sæva valet?
 O inimicum aurum! O homini infestissima pestis,
 Cui datur illecebras vincere posse tuas?
 Aurum homines suasit contemnere quicquid honestum
 est,

Et præter nomen nil retinere boni
 Aurum cuncta mali per terras semina sparsit,
 Aurum nocturnis furibus arma dedit
 Bella docet fortes, timidosque ad pessima ducit,
 Fœdis fragas artes, multiplicesque dolos,
 Nec vitii quicquam est quod non inveneris ortum
 Ex malesuadâ auri sacrilegâque fame
 Dixit, et ingemuit, Plutusque suum sibi numen
 Ante oculos, irâ fervidus, ipse sietit
 Arcam clausit avarus et ora horrentia rugis
 Ostendens, tremulum sic Deus increpuit
 Questibus his raucis mihi eur, stulto, obstrepis aures?
 Ista tui similis tristitia quisque canit
 Commaculavi egone humanum genus, improbe? Culpa,
 Dum rapis, et captas omnia, culpa tua est
 Mene execrandum censes, quia tam pretiosa
 Criminibus fiunt perniosa tuis?
 Virtutis specie, pulchro ceu pallio amictus
 Quisque catus nebulo sordida facta tegit
 Atque suis manibus commissa potentia, durum
 Et durum subito vergit ad imperium
 Hinc, nimium dum latro aurum detrudit in arcam,
 Idem aurum latet in pectore pestis edax
 Nutrit avaritiam et fastum, suspendere adunco
 Suadet naso inopes, et vitium omne docet
 Auri et larga probo si copia contigit, instar
 Roris dilapsi ex æthere cuncta beat
 Tum, quasi numen inesset, alit, fovet, educat orbos,
 Et viduas lacrymis ora rigare vetat.

COWPER

Quo sua crimina jure auro derivet avarus,
 Aurum animæ pretium qui cupit atque caput
 Lege pari gladium incuset sicarius atrox
 Cæso homine, et ferrum judicet esse reum

PAPILIO ET LIMAX

Qui subito ex imis rerum in fastigia surgit,
 Nativas sordes, quicquid agatur, olet.

VOTUM

O MATUTINI rores, auræque salubres,
 O nemora, et lætæ rivis felicibus herbæ,
 Graminei colles, et amœnæ in vallibus umbræ!
 Fata modò dederint quas olim in rure paterno
 Delicias, procul arte procul formidine novi,
 Quam vellem ignotus, quod mens mea semper arebat
 Ante larem proprium placidam expectare senectam,
 Tum demùm exactis non infeliceiter annis,
 Sortiri tacitum lapidem, aut sub cespite condi

W C

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FRENCH OF
MADAME DE LA MOTHE GUYON

[WHEN Mr Newton left Olney, he prevailed on Cowper to receive Mr Bull, of Newport Pagnell. The poet painted a glowing portrait of his new friend—"a dissenter, but a liberal one, a man of letters and of genius, a master of a fine imagination, or rather not master of it, with a tender and delicate sort of melancholy in his disposition, not less agreeable in its way." But nothing is perfect, and "the Bull," as his friend delighted to call him, smoked tobacco. He had not known Cowper a long time, when he put into his hands three volumes of poetry by Madame Guyon, in the hope that it might soothe his troubled spirit. He was, Cowper told Unwin, "her passionate admirer, rode twenty miles to see her picture in the house of a stranger, which stranger politely requested his acceptance of it. It is a striking portrait, too characteristic not to be a strong resem-

blance, and were it encompassed with a glory, instead of being dressed in a nun's hood, might pass for the face of an angel " Cowper was greatly pleased with this lady Her poetry was the only French verse that he ever read with satisfaction, and the neatness of it reminded him of Prior But he could not be insensible to one prominent defect—a familiarity of speech in spiritual things—"a wonderful fault," he said, "for such a woman to fall into, who spent her life in the contemplation of God's glory, who seems to have been always impressed with a sense of it, and sometimes quite absorbed in the views she had of it " In this point he particularly guarded his translation, either by suppressing objectionable passages, or by giving to them a more respectful tone of expression The name of Guyon is familiar to the readers of French ecclesiastical history as the subject of a controversy between Fencelon and Bossuet, pursued on one side, at least, with singular bitterness and pride Mr Hallam divides the mystical writers into two classes the first, believing in the illumination of the soul by an immediate communion of the Deity, the second, seeking a sort of absorption into the Divine Essence through the solemnizing influences of pure contemplation Among these Madame Guyon had her place All the care of Cowper failed in correcting the familiarity which he acknowledged, and the metre which he occasionally employed was most unfortunate, as recalling not only the music, but the themes of Shenstone's amatory pastorals Southey doubted the expediency of this work in Cowper's unquiet frame of mind, and believed the passages on which he brooded most to be those that seemed applicable to his own imaginary condition. He quotes, by way of example, the following stanzas, remarking the extreme freedom of the translation, which bears a personal allusion —

" Si vous me demandez ce je crois de moi,
Je n'en connois aucune chose,
Jadis je vivois par la foi,
O est dans la rien que je repose

" Un neant malheureux, qui ne demande pas
Qu'on lui fasse changer de place;
Etat pire que le trepas,
Et qui n'attend jamais de grace "

" My claim to life, though sought with earnest care,
No light within me, or without me, shows;
Once I had faith, but now in self-despair
Find my chief cordial, and my best repose

" My soul is a forgotten thing, she sinks,
Sinks and is lost, without a wish to rise,
Feels an indifference she abhors, and thinks
Her name erased for ever from the skies."

THE LOVE OF GOD THE END OF LIFE.

SINCE life in sorrow must be spent,
 So be it—I am well content,
 And meekly wait my last remove,
 Seeking only growth in love
 No bliss I seek, but to fulfil
 In life, in death, thy lovely will,
 No succours in my woes I want,
 Save what thou art pleased to grant
 Our days are number'd, let us spare
 Our anxious hearts a needless care
 'Tis thine to number out our days,
 Ours to give them to thy praise
 Love is our only business here,
 Love, simple, constant, and sincere,
 O blessed days thy servants see,
 Spent, O Lord! in pleasing thee!

LOVE FAITHFUL IN THE ABSENCE OF THE BELOVED

IN vain ye woo me to your harmless joys,
 Ye pleasant bowers, remote from strife and noise,
 Your shades, the witnesses of many a vow,
 Breathed forth in happier days, are irksome now,
 Denied that smile twas once my heaven to see,
 Such scenes, such pleasures, are all past with me
 In vain he leaves me, I shall love him still,
 And, though I mourn, not murmur at his will,
 I have no cause—an object all divine
 Might well grow weary of a soul like mine,
 Yet pity me, great God! forlorn, alone
 Heartless and hopeless, life and love all gone

LOVE PURE AND FERVENT

JEALOUS, and with love o'erflowing
 God demands a fervent heart,
 Grace and bounty still bestowing,
 Calls us to a grateful part.

Oh, then, with supreme affection

His paternal will regard!

If it cost us some dejection,

Every sigh has its reward.

Perfect love has power to soften

Cares that might our peace destroy,

Nay, does more—transforms them often,

Changing sorrow into joy

Sovereign Love appoints the measure

And the number of our pains,

And is pleased when we find pleasure

In the trials he ordains

THE ENTIRE SURRENDER

PEACE has unveil'd her smiling face,

And woo's thy soul to her embrace,

Enjoy'd with ease, if thou refrain

From earthly love, else sought in vain,

She dwells with all who truth prefer,

But seeks not them who seek not her

Yield to the Lord, with simple heart,

All that thou hast, and all thou art,

Renounce all strength but strength divine,

And peace shall be for ever thine

Behold the path which I have trod,

My path, till I go home to God

THE PERFECT SACRIFICE.

I PLACE an offering at thy shrine,

From taint and blemish clear,

Simple and pure in its design,

Of all that I hold dear.

I yield thee back thy gifts again,

Thy gifts which most I prize,

Desirous only to retain

The notice of thine eyes

But if, by thine adored decree,

That blessing be denied,

Resign'd, and unreluctant, see

My every wish subside

Thy will in all things I approve,
Exalted or cast down,
Thy will in every state I love,
And even in thy frown

GOD HIDES HIS PEOPLE.

To lay the soul that loves him low,
Becomes the Only-wise
To hide, beneath a veil of woe,
The children of the skies

Man, though a worm, would yet be great,
Though feeble, would seem strong,
Assumes an independent state,
By sacrilege and wrong

Strange the reverse, which, once abased,
The haughty creature proves !
He feels his soul a barren waste,
Nor dares affirm he loves

Scorn'd by the thoughtless and the vain,
To God he presses near,
Superior to the world's disdain,
And happy in its sneer

Oh welcome, in his heart he says,
Humility and shame !
Farewell the wish for human praise,
The music of a name !

But will not scandal mar the good
That I might else perform ?
And can God work it, if he would,
By so despised a worm ?

Ah, vainly anxious !—leave the Lord
To rule thee, and dispose,
Sweet is the mandate of his word,
And gracious all he does

He draws from human littleness
His grandeur and renown,
And generous hearts with joy confess
The triumph all his own.

Down then with self-exalting thoughts,
Thy faith and hope employ,
To welcome all that he allots,
And suffer shame with joy

No longer, then, thou wilt encroach
On his eternal right,
And he shall smile at thy approach,
And make thee his delight.

THE SECRETS OF DIVINE LOVE ARE TO BE KEPT.

SUN! stay thy course, this moment stay—
Suspend the o'erflowing tide of day,
Divulge not such a love as mine,
Ah! hide the mystery divine,
Lest man, who deems my glory shame,
Should learn the secret of my flame

O night! propitious to my views,
Thy sable awning wide diffuse,
Conceal alike my joy and pain,
Nor draw thy curtain back again,
Though morning, by the tears she shows,
Seems to participate my woes

Ye stars! whose faint and feeble fires
Express my languishing desires,
Whose slender beams pervade the skies
As silent as my secret sighs,
Those emanations of a soul,
That dart her fires beyond the pole,

Your rays, that scarce assist the sight,
That pierce, but not displace the night,
That shine indeed, but nothing show
Of all those various scenes below,
Bring no disturbance, rather prove
Incentives to a sacred love

Thou moon! whose never-failing course
Bespeaks a providential force,
Go, tell the tidings of my flame
To him who calls the stars by name,
Whose absence kills, whose presence cheers
Who blots, or brightens, all my years

While, in the blue abyss of space,
Thine orb performs its rapid race;
Still whisper in his listening ears
The language of my sighs and tears;
Tell him I seek him, far below,
Lost in a wilderness of woe

Ye thought-composing, silent hours,
Diffusing peace o'er all my powers,
Friends of the pensive, who conceal,
In darkest shades, the flames I feel,
To you I trust, and safely may,
The love that wastes my strength away.

In sylvan scenes and caverns rude,
I taste the sweets of solitude,
Retired indeed, but not alone,
I share them with a spouse unknown,
Who hides me here from envious eyes,
From all intrusion and surprise

Imbowering shades and dens profound:
Where echo rolls the voice around,
Mountains' whose elevated heads
A moist and misty veil o'erspreads,
Disclose a solitary bride
To him I love—to none beside

Ye rills, that, murmuring all the way,
Among the polished pebbles stay,
Creep silently along the ground,
Lest, drawn by that harmonious sound,
Some wanderer, whom I would not meet
Should stumble on my loved retreat

Enamell'd meads, and lullocks green,
And streams that water all the scene,
Ye torrents, loud in distant ears,
Ye fountains that receive my tears,
Ah! still conceal with caution due,
A charge I trust with none but you!

If, when my pain and grief increase,
I seem to enjoy the sweetest peace,
It is because I find so fair
The charming object of my care,
That I can sport and pleasure make
Of torment suffered for his sake

Ye meads and groves, unconscious things !
Ye know not whence my pleasure springs ;
Ye know not, and ye cannot know,
The source from which my sorrows flow
The dear sole cause of all I feel,—
He knows, and understands them well.

Ye deserts, where the wild beasts rove,
Scenes sacred to my hours of love,
Ye forests, in whose shades I stray,
Benighted under burning day,
Ah ! whisper not how blest am I,
Nor while I live, nor when I die

Ye lambs, who sport beneath these shades,
And bound along the mossy glades,
Be taught a salutary fear,
And cease to bleat when I am near
The wolf may hear your harmless cry,
Whom ye should dread as much as I

How calm, amid these scenes, my mind !
How perfect is the peace I find !
Oh hush, be still, my every part,
My tongue, my pulse, my beating heart !
That love, aspiring to its cause,
May suffer not a mement's pause.

Ye swift-finn'd nations, that abide
In seas, as fathomless as wide,
And, unsuspecting of a snare,
Pursue at large your pleasures there,
Poor sportive fools ! how soon dees man
Your heedless ignorance trepan !

Away ! dive deep into the brine,
Where never yet sunk plummet line ;
Trust me the vast leviathan
Is merciful, compared with man,
Avoid his arts, forsake the beach,
And never play within his reach

My soul her bondage ill endures,
I pant for liberty like yours,
I long for that immense profound,
That knows no bottom and no bound :
Lost in infinity, to prove
The incomprehensible of love

Ye birds, that lesson as ye fly,
 And vanish in the distant sky,
 To whom yon airy waste belongs,
 Resounding with your cheerful songs,
 Hasto to escape from human sight
 Fear less the vulture and the kite
 How blest and how secure am I,
 When, quitting earth I soar on high,
 When lost, like you I disappear,
 And float in a sublimer sphere,
 Whence falling, within human view,
 I am ensnared, and caught like you !
 Omniscient God, whose notice deigns
 To try the heart and search the reins,
 Compassionate the numerous woes,
 I dare not c'en to thee disclose,
 Oh save me from the cruel hands
 Of men, who fear not thy commands,
 Love, all subduing and divine,
 Care for a creature truly thine,
 Reign in a heart, disposed to own
 No sovereign but thyself alone
 Cherish a bride who cannot rove,
 Nor quit thee for a meaner love !

THE VICISSITUDES EXPERIENCED IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

I SUFFER fruitless anguish day by day,
 Each moment, as it passes, marks my pain,
 Scarce knowing whither, doubtfully I stray,
 And see no end of all that I sustain
 The more I strive the more I am withstood,
 Anxiety increasing every hour,
 My spirit finds no rest, performs no good,
 And nought remains of all my former power
 My peace of heart is fled, I know not where,
 My happy hours, like shadows, passed away
 Their sweet remembrance doubles all my care,
 Night darker seems, succeeding such a day

Dear faded joys and impotent regret
What profit is there in incessant tears ?
Oh thou, whom, once beheld, we ne'er forget,
Reveal thy love, and banish all my fears !

Alas ! he flies me—treats me as his foe,
Views not my sorrows, hears not when I plead ,
Woe such as mine, despised, neglected woe,
Unless it shortens life, is vain indeed

Pierced with a thousand wounds, I yet survive ,
My pangs are keen, but no complaint transpires !
And, while in terrors of thy wrath I live,
Hell seems to lose its less tremendous fires

Has hell a pain I would not gladly bear,
So thy severe displeasure might subside ?
Hopeless of ease, I seem already there,
My life extinguish'd, and yet death denied

Is this the joy so promised—this the love,
The unchanging love, so sworn in better days ?
Ah ! dangerous glories ! shown me but to prove
How lovely thou, and I how rash to gaze

Why did I see them ? had I still remain'd
Untaught, still ignorant how fair thou art,
My humbler wishes I had soon obtain'd,
Nor known the torments of a doubting heart

Deprived of all, yet feeling no desires,
Whence then, I cry, the pangs that I sustain ?
Dubious and uninform'd, my soul inquires,
Ought she to cherish or shake off her pain.

Suffering, I suffer not—sincerely love,
Yet feel no touch of that enlivening flame .
As chance inclines me, unconcern'd I move,
All times, and all events, to me the same

I search my heart, and not a wish is there
But burns with zeal that hated self may fall ,
Such is the sad disquietude I share,
A sea of doubts, and self the source of all

I ask not life, nor do I wish to die ,
And, if thine hand accomplish not my cure,
I would not purchase with a single sigh
A free discharge from all that I endure

I groan in chains, yet want not a release,
 Am sick, and know not the distemper'd part,
 Am just as void of purpose as of peace,
 Have neither plan, nor fear, nor hope, nor heart.

My claim to life, though sought with earnest care,
 No light within me, or without me, shows,
 Once I had faith, but now in self-despair
 Find my chief cordial and my best repose

My soul is a forgotten thing, she sinks,
 Sinks and is lost, without a wish to rise,
 Feels an indifference she abhors, and thinks
 Her name erased for ever from the skies

Language affords not my distress a name,—
 Yet it is real, and no sickly dream,
 'Tis love inflicts it, though to feel that flame
 Is all I know of happiness supreme

When love departs, a chaos wide and vast,
 And dark as hell, is opened in the soul,
 When love returns, the gloomy scene is past,
 No tempests shake her, and no fears control

Then tell me why these ages of delay?
 Oh love, all excellent, once more appear,
 Disperso the shades, and snatch me into day,
 From this abyss of night, these floods of fear!

No—love is angry, will not now endure
 A sigh of mine, or suffer a complaint,
 He smites me, wounds me, and withholds the cure,
 Exhausts my powers, and leaves me sick and faint.

He wounds, and ludes the hand that gave the blow
 He flies, he reappears, and wounds again—
 Was ever heart that loved thee treated so?
 Yet I adore thee, though it seem in vain

And wilt thou leave me, whom when lost and blind,
 Thou didst distinguish and vouchsafe to choose,
 Before thy laws were written in my mind,
 While yet the world had all my thoughts and views?

Now leave me, when, enamour'd of thy laws,
 I make thy glory my supreme delight?
 Now blot me from thy register, and cause
 A faithful soul to perish from thy sight?

What can have caused the change which I deplore
 Is it to prove me, if my heart be true?
 Permit me then, while prostrate I adore,
 To draw, and place its picture in thy view

'Tis thine without reserve, most simply thine,
 So given to thee, that it is not my own,
 A willing captive of thy grace divine,
 And loves, and seeks thee, for thyself alone

Pain cannot move it, danger cannot scare
 Pleasure and wealth, in its esteem, are dust,
 It loves thee, e'en when least inclined to spare
 Its tenderest feelings, and avows thee just

'Tis all thine own, my spirit is so too,
 An undivided offering at thy shrine,
 It seeks thy glory with no double view,
 Thy glory, with no secret bent to mine

Love, holy love! and art thou not severe,
 To slight me, thus devoted, and thus fix'd?
 Mine is an everlasting ardour, clear
 From all self-bias, generous and unmix'd

But I am silent, seeing what I see—
 And fear, with cause, that I am self-deceived,
 Not e'en my faith is from suspicion free,
 And that I love seems not to be believed

Live thou, and reign for ever, Glorious Lord!
 My last, least offering I present thee now—
 Renounce me, leave me, and be still ador'd!
 Slay me, my God, and I applaud the blow

WATCHING UNTO GOD IN THE NIGHT SEASON

SLEEP at last has fled these eyes,
 Nor do I regret his flight,
 More alert my spirits rise,
 And my heart is free and light

Nature silent all around,
 Not a single witness near,
 God as soon as sought is found,
 And the flame of love burns clear

Interruption, all day long,
Checks the current of my joys,
Creatures press me with a throng,
And perplex me with their noise

Undisturb'd I muse all night,
On the first Eternal Fair;
Nothing there obstructs delight,
Love is renovated there

Life, with its perpetual stir,
Proves a foe to love and me,
Fresh entanglements occur—
Comes the night and sets me free

Never more, sweet sleep, suspend
My enjoyments, always new
Leave me to possess my friend,
Other eyes and hearts subdue

Hush the world, that I may wake
To the taste of pure delights,
Oh the pleasures I partake—
God, the partner of my nights!

David, for the selfsame cause,
Night preferr'd to busy day,
Hearts whom heavenly beauty draws,
Wish the glaring sun away.

Sleep, self-lovers, is for you—
Souls, that love celestial know,
Fairer scenes by night can view,
Than the sun could ever show.

ON THE SAME.

SEASON of my purest pleasure,
Scaler of observing eyes!
When, in larger, freer measure,
I can commune with the skies,
While, beneath thy shade extended,
Weary man forgets his woes,
I, my daily trouble ended,
Find, in watching, my repose.

Silence all around prevailin',
 A-sleep hush'd in slumber sweet,
 No rest no more no more awakin',
 Now my God and I can meet
 Unweary'd nature slumberin',
 And rest to all partakes the calm,
 Be it the hour or out in numbers,
 Picture or song, or lofty psalm

Now my peace is pure and holy
 Slaves and lords without restraint,
 Which the day's false face and folly
 Cannot blanch or dim and faint
 Charmers of ears of rebellion
 How I shun the exceeding soul
 Since I have seen the conversion
 Is an evil to behold, none

We'll be patient and forbide hurt me,
 We'll be still, we'll be prove
 No, they teach me nor divert me,
 I have ears for none but love
 Me they run to esteem and foolish,
 Heedless of my words and replies
 I have no heart for fine polish,
 Nor the knowledge of the wise

Simple souls, and unpolluted,
 Pausing with the great,
 Have a sound and taste all suited
 To their dignity and state,
 All their talking, reading, writing,
 Are but talents misapplied;
 Infants' prattle I delight in,
 Nothing human choose beside

'Tis the secret fear of sinning
 Checks my tongue, or I should say,
 When I see the night beginning,
 I am glad of parting day
 Lo! the gentle admonition
 Whispers soft within my breast;
 "Choice befit not thy condition,
 Acquiescence suits thee best"

Henceforth, the repose and pleasure
 Night affords me I resign,
 And thy will shall be the measure,
 Wisdom infinite of mine
 Wishing is but inclination
 Quarrelling with thy decrees,
 Wayward nature finds the occasion—
 'Tis her folly and disease

Night, with its sublime enjoyments,
 Now no longer will I choose,
 Nor the day, with its employments,
 Irksome as they seem, refuse,
 Lessons of a God's inspiring
 Neither time nor place impedes,
 From our wishing and desiring
 Our unhappiness proceeds

ON THE SAME

NIGHT! how I love thy silent shades,
 My spirits they compose,
 The bliss of heaven my soul pervades,
 In spite of all my woes

While sleep instils her poppy dews
 In every slumbering eye,
 I watch to meditate and muse,
 In blest tranquillity

And when I feel a God immense
 Familiarly impart,
 With every proof he can dispense,
 His favour to my heart,

My native meanness I lament,
 Though most divinely fill'd
 With all the ineffable content,
 That Deity can yield

His purpose and his course he keeps;
 Treads all my reasonings down,
 Commands me out of Nature's deeps,
 And hides me in his own

When in the dust, its proper place,
Our pride of heart we lay,
'Tis then a deluge of his grace
Bears all our sins away

Thou whom I serve, and whose I am,
Whose influence from on high
Refines, and still refines my flame,
And makè's my fetters fly,

How wretched is the creature's state
Who thwarts thy gracious power,
Crush'd under sin's enormous weight,
Increasing every hour!

The night, when pass'd entire with thee,
How luminous and clear!
Then sleep has no delights for me,
Lest thou shouldst disappear

My Saviour! occupy me still
In this secure recess,
Let reason slumber if she will,
My joy shall not be less

Let reason slumber out the night,
But if thou deign to make
My soul the abode of truth and light
Ah, keep my heart awake!

THE JOY OF THE CROSS

Long plunged in sorrow, I resign
My soul to that dear hand of thine,
Without reserve or fear,
That hand shall wipe my streaming eyes,
Or into smiles of glad surprise
Transform the falling tear

My sole possession is thy love,
In earth beneath, or heaven above,
I have no other store
And though with fervent suit I pray,
And importune thee night and day,
I ask thee nothing more

My rapid hours pursue the course
 Prescribed them by love's sweetest force,
 And I thy sovereign will,
 Without a wish to escape my doom,
 Though still a sufferer from the womb,
 And doom'd to suffer still

By thy command, where'er I stray
 Sorrow attends me all my way,
 A never-failing friend,
 And, if my sufferings may augment
 Thy praise, behold me well content—
 Let sorrow still attend!

It cost me no regret, that she,
 Who follow'd Christ, should follow me;
 And though, where'er she goes,
 Thorns spring spontaneous at her feet,
 I love her, and extract a sweet
 From all my bitter woes

Adieu! ye vain delights of earth,
 Insipid sports, and childish mirth,
 I taste no sweets in you,
 Unknown delights are in the cross,
 All joy beside to me is dross,
 And Jesus thought so too

The cross! Oh ravishment and bliss—
 How grateful e'en its anguish is,
 Its bitterness how sweet!
 There every sense, and all the mind,
 In all her faculties refined,
 Tastes happiness complete

Souls, once enabled to disdain
 Base sublunary joys, maintain
 Their dignity secure,
 The fever of desire is pass'd,
 And love has all its genuine taste,
 Is delicate and pure

Self-love no grace in sorrow sees,
 Consults her own peculiar ease,
 'Tis all the bliss she knows,
 But nobler aims true Love employ,
 In self-denial is her joy,
 In suffering her repose

Sorrow and Love go side by side,
Nor height nor depth can e'er divide
Their heaven appointed bands,
Those dear associates still are one,
Nor till the race of life is run
Disjoin their wedded hands

Jesus, avenger of our fall,
Thou faithful lover, above all
The cross has ever borne!
Oh tell me,—life is in thy voice—
How much afflictions were thy choice,
And sloth and ease thy scorn!

Thy choice and mine shall be the same
Inspirer of that holy flame,
Which must for ever blaze!
To take the cross and follow thee,
Where love and duty lead, shall be
My portion and my praise

JOY IN MARTYRDOM

SWEET tenants of this grove!
Who sing without design,
A song of artless love,
In unison with mine
These echoing shades return
Full many a note of ours,
That wise ones cannot learn,
With all their boasted powers

O thou! whose sacred charms
These hearts so seldom love,
Although thy beauty warms
And blesses all above,
How slow are human things,
To choose their happiest lot!
All-glorious King of kings,
Say why we love thee not?

This heart, that cannot rest,
Shall thine for ever prove,
Though bleeding and distress'd,
Yet joyful in thy love

'Tis happy though it breaks
Beneath thy chastening hand;
And speechless, yet it speaks,
What thou canst understand.

SIMPLE TRUST

STILL, still, without ceasing,
I feel it increasing,
This fervour of holy desire;
And often exclaim,
Let me die in the flame
Of a love that can never expire!

Had I words to explain
What she must sustain
Who dies to the world and its ways;
How joy and affright,
Distress and delight,
Alternately chequer her days

Thou, sweetly severe!
I would make thee appear,
In all thou art pleased to award,
Not more in the sweet
Than the bitter I meet,
My tender and merciful Lord.

This faith, in the dark,
Pursuing its mark,
Through many sharp trials of love
Is the sorrowful waste
That is to be pass'd
In the way to the Canaan above

THE NECESSITY OF SELF-ABASEMENT.

SOURCE of love, my brighter sun,
Thou alone my comfort art,
See, my race is almost run,
Hast thou left this trembling heart?

In my youth thy charming eyes
Drew me from the ways of men,
Then I drank unmingled joys,
Frown of thine saw never then

Spouse of Christ was then my name,
And, devoted all to thee,
Strangely jealous I became,
Jealous of this self in me

Thee to love, and none beside,
Was my darling, sole employ,
While alternately I died,
Now of grief, and now of joy

Through the dark and silent night
On thy radiant smiles I dwelt,
And to see the dawning light
Was the keenest pain I felt.

Thou my gracious teacher wert,
And thine eye, so close applied,
While it watch'd thy pupil's heart,
Seem'd to look at none beside

Conscious of no evil drift,
This, I cried, is love indeed—
'Tis the giver, not the gift,
Whence the joys I feel proceed

But, soon humbled and laid low,
Stript of all thou hast conferr'd,
Nothing left but sin and woe,
I perceived how I had err'd.

Oh, the vain conceit of man,
Dreaming of a good his own,
Arrogating all he can,
Though the Lord is good alone!

He the graces thou hast wrought
Makes subservient to his pride;
Ignorant that one such thought
Passes all his sin beside

Such his folly—proved, at last,
By the loss of that repose,
Self complacence cannot taste,
Only love divine bestows

'Tis by this reproof severe,
 And by this reproof alone,
 His defects at last appear,
 Man is to himself made known
 Learn, all earth! that feeble man,
 Sprung from this terrestrial clod,
 Nothing is, and nothing can,
 Life and power are all in God

LOVE INCREASED BY SUFFERING

"I love the Lord," is still the strain
 This heart delights to sing,
 But I reply—your thoughts are vain,
 Perhaps 'tis no such thing
 Before the power of love divine
 Creation fades away,
 Till only God is seen to shine
 In all that we survey
 In gulfs of awful night we find
 The God of our desires,
 'Tis there he stamps the yielding mind,
 And doubles all its fires
 Flames of encircling love invest,
 And pierce it sweetly through,
 'Tis fill'd with sacred joy, yet press'd
 With sacred sorrow too
 Ah, love! my heart is in the right—
 Amidst a thousand woes,
 To thee its ever new delight,
 And all its peace, it owes
 Fresh causes of distress occur
 Where'er I look or move,
 The comforts I to all prefer
 Are solitude and love
 Nor exile I nor prison fear,
 Love makes my courage great:
 I find a Saviour everywhere,
 His race in every state

Nor castle walls, nor dungeons deep,
Exclude his quickening beams,
There I can sit, and sing, and weep,
And dwell on heavenly themes

There sorrow, for his sake, is found
A joy beyond compare,
There no presumptuous thoughts abound,
No pride can enter there

A Saviour doubles all my joys,
And sweetens all my pains,
His strength in my defence employs,
Consoles me and sustains

I fear no ill, resent no wrong,
Nor feel a passion move,
When malice whets her slanderous tongue,
Such patience is in love

SCENES FAVOURABLE TO MEDITATION.

Wilds horrid and dark with o'ershadowing trees,
Rocks that ivy and briars infold,
Scenes nature with dread and astonishment sees,
But I with a pleasure untold,

Though awfully silent, and shaggy, and rude,
I am charm'd with the peace ye afford,
Your shades are a temple where none will intrude
Tho' abode of my lover and Lord

I am sick of thy splendour, O fountain of day,
And here I am hid from its beams,
Here safely contemplate a brighter display
Of the noblest and holiest of themes

Ye forests, that yield me my sweetest repose,
Where stillness and solitude reign,
To you I securely and boldly disclose
The dear anguish of which I complain

Here, sweetly forgetting and wholly forgot
By the world and its turbulent throng,
The birds and the streams lend me many a note
That aids meditation and song

Here, wandering in scenes that are sacred to night,
 Love wears me and wastes me away,
 And often the sun has spent much of its light,
 Ere yet I perceive it is day

While a mantle of darkness envelops the sphere,
 My sorrows are sadly rehearsed
 To me the dark hours are all equally dear,
 And the last is as sweet as the first

Here I and the beasts of the deserts agree,
 Mankind are the wolves that I fear,
 They grudge me my natural right to be free,
 But nobody questions it here

Though little is found in this dreary abode
 That appetite wishes to find,
 My spirit is soothed by the presence of God,
 And appetite wholly resign'd

Ye desolate scenes, to your solitude led,
 My life I in praises employ,
 And scarce know the source of the tears that I shed
 Proceed they from sorrow or joy

There's nothing I seem to have skill to discern
 I feel out my way in the dark,
 Love reigns in my bosom, I constantly burn,
 Yet hardly distinguish the spark

I live, yet I seem to myself to be dead,
 Such a riddle is not to be found,
 I am nourish'd without knowing how I am fed
 I have nothing, and yet I abound

Oh love! who in darkness art pleased to abide,
 Though dimly, yet surely I see,
 That these contraricties only reside
 In the soul that is chosen of thee

Ah send me not back to the race of mankind,
 Perversely by folly beguiled,
 For where, in the crowds I have left, shall I find
 The spirit and heart of a child?

Here let me, though fix'd in a desert, be free,
 A little one whom they despise,
 Though lost to the world, if in union with thee,
 Shall be holy, and happy, and wise

THE NATIVITY.

'Tis folly all—let me no more be told
 Of Parian porticos, and roofs of gold;
 Delightful views of nature, dress'd by art,
 Enchant no longer this indifferent heart,
 The Lord of all things, in his humble birth
 Makes mean the proud magnificence of earth;
 The straw, the manger, and the mouldering wall,
 Eclipse its lustre, and I scorn it all

Canals, and fountains, and delicious vales,
 Green slopes and plains, whose plenty never fails;
 Deep-rooted groves, whose heads sublimely rise,
 Earthborn and yet ambitious to the skies,
 The abundant foliage of whose gloomy shades,
 Vainly the sun in all its power invades,
 Where warbled airs of sprightly birds resound,
 Whose verdure lives while Winter scowls around;
 Rocks, lofty mountains, caverns dark and deep,
 And torrents raving down the rugged steep,
 Smooth downs, whose fragrant herbs the spirits cheer,
 Meads crown'd with flowers, streams musical and
 clear,

Whose silver waters, and whose murmurs, join
 Their artless charms, to make the scene divine,
 The fruitful vineyard, and the furrow'd plain,
 That seems a rolling sea of golden grain
 All, all have lost the charms they once possess'd;
 An infant God reigns sovereign in my breast,
 From Bethlehem's bosom I no more will rove,
 There dwells the Saviour, and there rests my love

Ye mightier rivers, that, with sounding force,
 Urge down the valleys your impetuous course!
 Winds, clouds, and lightnings! and, ye waves, whose
 heads,

Curl'd into monstrous forms, the seaman dreads!
 Horrid abyss, where all experience fails,
 Spread with the wreck of planks and shatter'd sails
 On whose broad back grim Death triumphant rides.
 While havoc floats on all thy swelling tides,
 Thy shores a scene of ruin strow'd around
 With vessels bulged, and bodies of the drown'd!

Ye fish, that sport beneath the boundless waves
 And rest, secure from man, in rocky caves:

Swift-darting sharks, and whales of hideous size,
 Whom all the aquatic world with terror eyes!
 Had I but faith immovable and true,
 I might defy the fiercest storm like you
 The world, a more disturb'd and boisterous sea,
 When Jesus shows a smile, affrights not me,
 He hushes me, and in vain the billows roar,
 Break harmless at my feet, and leave the shore
 Thou azure vault, where, through the gloom of
 night,

Thick sown, we see such countless worlds of light!
 Thou moon, whose car encompassing the skies,
 Restores lost nature to our wondering eyes,
 Again retiring, when the brighter sun
 Begins the course he seems in haste to run!
 Behold him where he shines! his rapid rays,
 Themselves unmeasured, measure all our days;
 Nothing impedes the race he would pursue,
 Nothing escapes his penetrating view,
 A thousand lands confess his quickening heart,
 And all he cheers are fruitful, fair, and sweet.

Far from enjoying what these scenes disclose,
 I feel the thorn, alas! but miss the rose
 Too well I know this aching heart requires
 More solid gold to fill its vast desires,
 In vain they represent his matchless might,
 Who call'd them out of deep primeval night,
 Their form and beauty but augment my woe,
 I seek the Giver of those charms they show
 Nor, him beside, throughout the world he made,
 Lives there in whom I trust for cure to rid

Infinite God, thou great univall'd One!
 Whose glory makes a blot of yonder sun,
 Compared with thine, how dim his beauty seems!
 How quench'd the radiance of his golden beams!
 Thou art my bliss the light by which I move;
 In thee alone dwells all that I can love
 All darkness flies when thou art pleas'd t' appear
 A sudden spring renews the fading year,
 Where'er I turn I see thy power and grace,
 The watchful guardians of our heedless race,
 Thy various creatures in one strain agree,
 All, in all times and places, speak of thee,
 E'en I, with trembling heart and stammering
 tongue,

Attempt thy praise and join the general song

Almighty Former of this wondrous plan,
 Faintly reflected in thine image, man—
 Holy and just—the greatness of whose name
 Fills and supports this universal frame,
 Diffused throughout the infinitude of space,
 Who art thyself thine own vast dwelling place,
 Soul of our soul, whom yet no sense of ours
 Discerns, eluding our most active powers,
 Encircling shades attend thine awful throne,
 That veil thy face, and keep thee still unknown;
 Unknown, though dwelling in our inmost part,
 Lord of the thoughts, and Sovereign of the heart

Repeat the charming truth that never tires,
 No God is like the God my soul desires,
 He at whose voice heaven trembles, even he
 Great as he is, knows how to stoop to me—
 Lo! there he lies—that smiling infant said,
 “Heaven, earth, and sea, exist!”—and they obey’d.
 E’en he, whose being swells beyond the skies,
 Is born of woman, lives, and mourns, and dies,
 Eternal and immortal, seems to cast
 That glory from his brows, and breathes his last
 Trivial and vain the works that man has wrought,
 How do they shrink and vanish at the thought!

Sweet solitude, and scene of my repose!
 This rustic sight assuages all my woes—
 That crib contains the Lord, whom I adore;
 And earth’s a shade that I pursue no more
 He is my firm support, my rock, my tower,
 I dwell secure beneath his sheltering power,
 And hold this mean retreat for ever dear,
 For all I love, my soul’s delight, is here
 I see the Almighty swathed in infant bands,
 Tied helpless down the thunder-bearer’s hands!
 And, in this shed, that mystery discern,
 Which faith and love, and they alone, can learn

Ye tempests, spare the slumbers of your Lord
 Ye zephyrs, all your whisper’d sweets afford!
 Confess the God, that guides the rolling year,
 Heaven, do him homage, and thou, earth, revere
 Ye shepherds, monarchs, sages, hither bring
 Your hearts an offering, and adore your King!
 Pure be those hearts, and rich in faith and love,
 Join, in his praise, the harmonious world above,
 To Bethlehem haste, rejoice in his repose,
 And praise him there for all that he bestows!

Man, busy man, alas! can ill afford
 To obey the summons, and attend the Lord,
 Perverted reason revels and runs wild,
 By glittering shows of pomp and wealth beguiled,
 And, blind to genuine excellence and grace,
 Finds not her author in so mean a place
 Ye unbelieving! learn a wiser part,
 Distrust your erring sense, and search your heart
 There soon ye shall perceive a kindling flame
 Glow for that infant God, from whom it came,
 Resist not, quench not that divine desire,
 Melt all your adamant in heavenly fire!

Not so will I requite thee, gentle love!
 Yielding and soft this heart shall ever prove,
 And every heart beneath thy power should fall,
 Glad to submit, could mine contain them all.
 But I am poor, oblation I have none,
 None for a Saviour, but himself alone
 Whate'er I render thee, from thee it came
 And, if I give my body to the flame,
 My patience, love, and energy divine
 Of heart, and soul, and spirit, all are thine
 Ah, vain attempt to expunge the mighty score!
 The more I pay, I owe thee still the more

Upon my meanness, poverty, and guilt,
 The trophy of thy glory shall be built
 My self-disdain shall be the unshaken base,
 And my deformity its fairest grace,
 For destitute of good, and rich in ill,
 Must be my state, and my description still

And do I grieve at such a humbling lot?
 Nay, but I cherish and enjoy the thought—
 Vain pageantry and pomp of earth, adieu!

I have no wish, no memory for you;
 The more I feel my misery, I adore
 The sacred inmate of my soul the more,
 Rich in his love, I feel my noblest pride
 Spring from the sense of having nought beside

In Thee I find wealth, comfort, virtue, might;
 My wanderings prove thy wisdom infinite,
 All that I have I give thee, and then see
 All contrarieties unite in thee,
 For thou hast join'd them, taking up our woe,
 And pouring out thy bliss on worms below,
 By filling with thy grace and love divine
 A gulf of evil in this heart of mine

This is, indeed, to bid the valleys rise,
And the hills sink—'tis matching earth and skies,
I feel my weakness, thank thee, and deplore
An aching heart, that throbs to thank thee more,
The more I love thee, I the more reprove
A soul so lifeless, and so slow to love,
Till, on a deluge of thy mercy toss'd,
I plunge into that sea, and there am lost

GOD NEITHER KNOWN NOR LOVED BY THE WORLD

Ye linnets, let us try, beneath this grove,
Which shall be loudest in our Maker's praise!
In quest of some forlorn retreat I rove,
For all the world is blind, and wanders from his ways

That God alone should prop the sinking soul,
Fills them with rage against his empire now
I traverse earth in vain from pole to pole,
To seek one simple heart, set free from all below

They speak of love, yet little feel its sway,
While in their bosoms many an idol lurks,
Their base desires, well satisfied, obey,
Leave the Creator's hand, and lean upon his works

'Tis therefore I can dwell with man no more,
Your fellowship, ye warblers' suits me best
Pure love has lost its price, though prized of yore,
Profaned by modern tongues, and slighted as a jest

My God, who form'd you for his praise alone,
Beholds his purpose well fulfill'd in you,
Come, let us join the choir before his throne,
Partaking in his praise with spirits just and true

Yes, I will always love, and, as I ought,
Tune to the praise of love my ceaseless voice,
Preferring love too vast for human thought,
In spite of erring men, who cavil at my choice.

Why have I not a thousand thousand hearts,
Lord of my soul! that they might all be thine?
If thou approve—the zeal thy smile imparts,
How should it ever fail! can such a fire decline?

Love pure and holy is a deathless fire,
 Its object heavenly, it must ever blaze
 Eternal love a God must needs inspire,
 When once he wins the heart, and fits it for his praise

Self-love dismiss'd—'tis then we live indeed—
 In her embrace, death, only death is found
 Come, then, one noble effort, and succeed,
 Cast off the chain of self with which thy soul is bound!

Oh! I could cry, that all the world might hear,
 Ye self-tormenters, love your God alone,
 Let his unquall'd excellence be dear,
 Dear to your inmost souls, and make him all your own!

They hear me not—alas! how fond to rove
 In endless chase of folly's specious lure!
 'Tis here alone, beneath this shady grove,
 I taste the sweets of truth—here only am secure

THE SWALLOW

I AM fond of the swallow—I learn from her flight,
 Had I skill to improve it, a lesson of love
 How seldom on earth do we see her alight!
 She dwells in the skies, she is ever above

It is on the wing that she takes her repose,
 Suspended and poised in the regions of air,
 'Tis not in our fields that her sustenance grows,
 It is wing'd like herself, 'tis ethereal fare

She comes in the spring, all the summer she stays,
 And dreading the cold still follows the sun—
 So, true to our love we should covet his rays,
 And the place where he shines not immediately shun

Our light should be love, and our nourishment prayer;
 It is dangerous food that we find upon earth,
 The fruit of this world is beset with a snare,
 In itself it is hurtful, as vile in its birth

'Tis rarely if ever she settles below,
 And only when building a nest for her young,
 Were it not for her brood she would never bestow
 A thought upon anything filthy as dung

Let us leave it ourselves, ('tis a mortal abode,)
 To bask every moment in infinite love,
 Let us fly the dark winter, and follow the road
 That leads to the dayspring appearing above

THE TRIUMPH OF HEAVENLY LOVE DESIRED

Ah! reign wherever man is found,
 My Spouse, beloved and divine!
 Then I am rich, and I abound,
 When every human heart is thine.

A thousand sorrows pierce my soul,
 To think that all are not thine own
 Ah! be adored from pole to pole,
 Where is thy zeal? arise, be known!

All hearts are cold, in every place,
 Yet earthly good with warmth pursue,
 Dissolve them with a flash of grace,
 Thaw these of ice, and give us new!

A FIGURATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE OF DIVINE LOVE,

IN BRINGING A SOUL TO THE POINT OF SELF RENUNCIATION
 AND ABSOLUTE ACQUIESCENCE

'Twas my purpose, on a day,
 To embark, and sail away
 As I climb'd the vessel's side,
 Love was sporting in the tide,
 "Come," he said—"ascend—make haste,
 Launch into the boundless waste"

Many mariners were there,
 Having each his separate care
 They that row'd us held their eyes
 Fix'd upon the starry skies,
 Others steer'd, or turn'd the sails
 To receive the shifting gales

Love, with power divine supplied,
 Suddenly my courage tried,
 In a moment it was night,
 Ship and skies were out of sight;
 On the briny wave I lay,
 Floating rushes all my stay

Did I with resentment burn
 At this unexpected turn?
 Did I wish myself on shore,
 Never to forsake it more?
 No—"My soul," I cried, "be still;
 If I must be lost, I will"

Next he hasten'd to convey
 Both my frail supports away
 Seized my rushes, bade the waves
 Yawn into a thousand graves.
 Down I went, and sunk as lead,
 Ocean closing o'er my head

Still, however, life was safe,
 And I saw him turn and laugh
 "Friend," he cried, "adieu! lie low,
 While the wintry storms shall blow;
 When the spring has calm'd the main
 You shall rise and float again."

Soon I saw him, with dismay,
 Spread his plumes and soar away;
 Now I mark his rapid flight,
 Now he leaves my aching sight,
 He is gone whom I adore,
 'Tis in vain to seek him more

How I trembled then and fear'd,
 When my love had disappear'd!
 "Wilt thou leave me thus," I cried,
 "Whelm'd beneath the rolling tide?"
 Vain attempt to reach his ear!
 Love was gone, and would not hear.

Ah! return, and love me still;
 See me subject to thy will;
 Frown with wrath, or smile with grace,
 Only let me see thy face!
 Evil I have none to fear,
 All is good if thou art near.

Yet he leaves me—cruel fate!
 Leaves me in my lost estate—
 Have I sinn'd? Oh, say wherein
 Tell me, and forgive my sin!
 King, and Lord, whom I adore,
 Shall I see thy face no more?

Be not angry, I resign,
 Henceforth all my will to thine
 I consent that thou depart,
 Though thine absence breaks my heart;
 Go then, and for ever too;
 All is right that thou wilt do

This was just what love intended,
 Ho was now no more offended,
 Soon as I became a child,
 Love return'd to me and smiled
 Never strife shall more betide
 'Twixt the Bridegroom and his bride

A CHILD OF GOD LONGING TO SEE HIM BELOVED

THERE's not an echo round me,
 But I am glad should learn,
 How pure a fire has found me,—
 The love with which I burn
 For none attends with pleasure
 To what I would reveal,
 They slight me out of measure,
 And laugh at what I feel.

The rocks receive less proudly
 The story of my flame,
 When I approach, they loudly
 Reverberate his name
 I speak to them of sadness,
 And comforts at a stand,
 They bid me look for gladness,
 And better days at hand

Far from all habitation,
 I heard a happy sound,
 Big with the consolation
 That I have often found.

I said, "My lot is sorrow,
My grief has no alloy,"
The rocks replied—"To-morrow,
To-morrow brings thee joy."

These sweet and sacred tidings,
What bliss it is to hear!
For, spite of all my chidings,
My weakness and my fear,
No sooner I receive them,
Than I forget my pain,
And, happy to believe them,
I love as much again

I fly to scenes romantic,
Where never men resort;
For in an age so frantic
Impiety is sport
For riot and confusion
They barter things above,
Condemning, as delusion,
The joy of perfect love

In this sequester'd corner,
None hears what I express;
Deliver'd from the scorner,
What peace do I possess!
Beneath the boughs reclining,
Or roving o'er the wild,
I live as undesigning
And harmless as a child.

No troubles here surprise me,
I innocently play,
While Providence supplies me,
And guards me all the day;
My dear and kind defender
Preserves me safely here,
From men of pomp and splendour
Who fill a child with fear.

ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOUL AFTER GOD.

My Spouse ! in whose presence I live,
Sole object of all my desires,
Who know'st what a flame I conceive,
And canst easily double its fires !
How pleasant is all that I meet !
From fear of adversity free,
I find even sorrow made sweet,
Because 'tis assign'd me by thee

Transported I see thee display
Thy riches and glory divine,
I have only my life to repay,
Take what I would gladly resign
Thy will is the treasure I seek,
For thou art as faithful as strong ;
There let me, obedient and meek,
Repose myself all the day long

My spirit and faculties fail,
Oh finish what love has begun !
Destroy what is sinful and frail,
And dwell in the soul thou hast won !
Dear theme of my wonder and praise,
I cry, who is worthy as thou !
I can only be silent and gaze !
'Tis all that is left to me now.

Oh glory in which I am lost,
Too deep for the plummet of thought ;
On an ocean of Deity toss'd,
I am swallow'd, I sink into nought
Yet, lost and absorb'd as I seem,
I chant to the praise of my King ,
And though overwhelm'd by the theme.
Am happy whenever I sing

GRATITUDE AND LOVE TO GOD.

ALL are indebted much to thee,
 But I far more than all,
 From many a deadly snare set free,
 And raised from many a fall,
 Overwhelm me, from above,
 Daily with thy boundless love

What bonds of gratitude I feel
 No language can declare,
 Beneath the oppressive weight I reel
 'Tis more than I can bear
 When shall I that blessing prove,
 To return thee love for love?

Spirit of charity, dispense
 Thy grace to every heart,
 Expel all other spirits thence,
 Drive self from every part,
 Charity divine, draw nigh,
 Break the chains in which we lie!

All selfish souls, whate'er they feign,
 Have still a slavish lot,
 They boast of liberty in vain,
 Of love, and feel it not
 He whose bosom glows with thee
 He, and he alone is free

O blessedness, all bliss above,
 When thy pure fires prevail!
 Love only teaches what is love,
 All other lessons fail
 We learn its name, but not its powers
 Experience only makes it ours

TRUTH AND DIVINE LOVE REJECTED BY
THE WORLD

O LOVE, of pure and heavenly birth!
 O simple truth, scarce known on earth!
 Whom men resist with stubborn will,
 And, more perverse and daring still,
 Smother and quench with reasoning vain,
 While error and deception reign

Whence comes it, that, your power the same
As his on high from whence you came,
Ye rarely find a listening ear,
Or heart that makes you welcome here?—
Because ye bring reproach and pain,
Where'er ye visit, in your train

The world is proud, and cannot bear
The scorn and calumny ye share,
The praise of men the mark they mean,
They fly the place where ye are seen;
Pure love, with scandal in the rear,
Suits not the vain, it costs too dear

Then, let the price be what it may,
Though poor I am prepared to pay,
Come shame, come sorrow, spite of tears,
Weakness and heart-oppressing fears,
One soul, at least, shall not repine,
To give you room, come, reign in mine!

HAPPY SOLITUDE—UNHAPPY MEN

My heart is easy, and my burden light,
I smile, though sad, when thou art in my sight
The more my woes in secret I deplore,
I taste thy goodness, and I love thee more

There, while a solemn stillness reigns around,
Faith, love, and hope within my soul abound;
And, while the world suppose me lost in care,
The joys of angels, unperceived, I share

Thy creatures wrong thee, O thou sovereign good!
Thou art not loved, because not understood,
This grieves me most, that vain pursuits beguile
Ungrateful men, regardless of thy smile

Frail beauty and false honour are adored,
While thee they scorn, and trifle with thy word;
Pass, unconcerned, a Saviour's sorrows by;
And hunt their ruin with a zeal to die

LIVING WATER.

THE fountain in its source
 No drought of summer fears;
 The farther it pursues its course,
 The nobler it appears
 But shallow cisterns yield
 A scanty short supply,
 The morning sees them amply fill'd,
 At evening they are dry.

DIVINE JUSTICE AMIABLE

THOU hast no lightnings, O thou Just!
 Or I their force should know,
 And if thou strike me into dust,
 My soul approves the blow

The heart, that values less its ease
 Than it adores thy ways,
 In thine avenging anger sees
 A subject of its praise

Pleased I could be, conceal'd and lost,
 In shades of central night,
 Not to avoid thy wrath, thou know'st,
 But lest I grieve thy sight

Smite me, O thou, whom I provoke!
 And I will love thee still
 The well deserved and righteous stroke
 Shall please me, though it kill

Am I not worthy to sustain
 The worst thou canst devise?
 And dare I seek thy throne again,
 And meet thy sacred eyes?

Far from afflicting, thou art kind;
 And, in my saddest hours,
 An unction of thy grace I find,
 Pervading all my powers

Alas ! thou spar'st me yet again ,
And, when thy wrath should move,
Too gentle to endure my pain,
Thou sooth'st me with thy love.

I have no punishment to fear,
But, ah ! that smile from thee
Imparts a pang far more severe,
Than woe itself would be

THE SOUL THAT LOVES GOD FINDS HIM EVERYWHERE

Oh thou, by long experience tried,
Near whom no grief can long abide,
My love ! how full of sweet content
I pass my years of banishment !

All scenes alike engaging prove
To souls impress'd with sacred love '
Where'er they dwell, they dwell in thee ;
In heaven, in earth, or on the sea

To me remains nor place nor time ,
My country is in every clime ,
I can be calm and free from care
On any shore, since God is there.

While place we seek, or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none ,
But, with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay

Could I be cast where thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot ,
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all

My country, Lord, art thou alone,
Nor other can I claim or own ,
The point where all my wishes meet
My law, my love, life's only sweet !

I hold by nothing here below,
 Appoint my journey, and I go,
 Though pierc'd by scorn, oppress'd by pride
 I feel thee good—feel nought beside

No frowns of men can hurtful prove
 To souls on fire with heavenly love,
 Though men and devils both condemn,
 No gloomy days arise from them

Ah then ' to his embrace repair,
 My soul, thou art no stranger there;
 There love divine shall be thy guard,
 And peace and safety thy reward

THE TESTIMONY OF DIVINE ADOPTION

How happy are the new-born race,
 Partakers of adopting grace,

How pure the bliss they share!
 Hid from the world and all its eyes,
 Within their heart the blessing lies,
 And conscience feels it there

The moment we believe, 'tis ours,
 And if we love with all our powers
 The God from whom it came,
 And if we serve with hearts sincere,
 'Tis still discernible and clear,
 An undisputed claim

But, ah! if foul and wilful sin
 Stain and dishonour us within,
 Farewell the joy we knew,
 Again the slaves of nature's sway,
 In labyrinths of our own we stray,
 Without a guide or clue

The chaste and pure, who fear to grieve
 The gracious spirit they receive,
 His work distinctly trace
 And, strong in undissembling love,
 Boldly assert and clearly prove
 Their hearts his dwelling-place

Oh messenger of dear delight,
 Whose voice dispels the deepest night,
 Sweet peace-proclaiming Dove!
 With thee at hand, to soothe our pains,
 No wish unsatisfied remains,
 No task but that of love

'Tis love unites what sin divides,
 The centre, where all bliss resides,
 To which the soul once brought,
 Reclining on the first great cause,
 From his abounding sweetness draws
 Peace passing human thought

Sorrow foregoes its nature there,
 And life assumes a tranquil air,
 Divested of its woes,
 There sovereign goodness soothes the breast,
 Till then incapable of rest,
 In sacred sure repose

DIVINE LOVE ENDURES NO RIVAL.

Love is the Lord whom I obey,
 Whose will transported I perform;
 The centre of my rest, my stay,
 Love's all in all to me, myself a worm.

For uncreated charms I burn,
 Oppress'd by slavish fear no more,
 For one in whom I may discern,
 E'en when he frowns, a sweetness I adore

He little loves him who complains,
 And finds him rigorous and severe,
 His heart is sordid, and he feigns,
 Though loud in boasting of a soul sincere

Love causes grief, but 'tis to move
 And stimulate the slumbering mind,
 And he has never tasted love,
 Who shuns a pang so graciously design'd

Sweet is the cross, above all sweets,
 To souls enamoured with thy smiles ;
 The keenest woe life ever meets,
 Love strips of all its terrors, and beguiles.

'Tis just that God should not be dear
 Where self engrosses all the thought,
 And groans and murmurs make it clear,
 Whatever else is loved, the Lord is not

The love of thee flows just as much
 As that of ebbing self subsides ,
 Our hearts, their scantiness is such,
 Bear not the conflict of two rival tides

Both cannot govern in one soul
 Then let self-love be dispossess'd ,
 The love of God deserves the whole,
 And will not dwell with so despised a guest.

SELF-DIFFIDENCE

SOURCE of love, and light of day,
 Tear me from myself away ,
 Every view and thought of mine
 Cast into the mould of thine ,
 Teach, O teach this faithless heart
 A consistent, constant part ;
 Or, if it must live to grow
 More rebellious, break it now !

Is it thus that I requite
 Grace and goodness infinite ?
 Every trace of every boon
 Cancell'd and erased so soon !
 Can I grieve thee, whom I love ,
 Thee, in whom I live and move ?
 If my sorrow touch thee still,
 Save me from so great an ill !

Oh ! the oppressive irksome weight
 Felt in an uncertain state ,
 Comfort, peace, and rest, adieu,
 Should I prove at last untrue !

Still I choose thee, follow still
 Every notice of thy will,
 But, unstable, strangely weak,
 Still let slip the good I seek

Self-confiding wretch, I thought
 I could serve thee as I ought,
 Win thee, and deserve to feel
 All the love thou canst reveal,
 Trusting self, a bruised reed,
 Is to be deceived indeed
 Save me from this harm and loss,
 Lest my gold turn all to dross

Self is earthly—faith alone
 Makes an unseen world our own;
 Faith relinquish'd, how we roam,
 Feel our way, and leave our home!
 Spurious gems our hopes entice,
 While we scorn the pearl of price,
 And, preferring servant's pay,
 Cast the children's bread away.

THE ACQUIESCENCE OF PURE LOVE

LOVE! if thy destined sacrifice am I,
 Come, slay thy victim, and prepare thy fires,
 Plunged in thy depths of mercy, let me die
 The death which every soul that lives desires!

I watch my hours, and see them fleet away,
 The time is long that I have languish'd here,
 Yet all my thoughts thy purposes obey,
 With no reluctance, cheerful and sincere

To me 'tis equal, whether love ordain
 My life or death, appoint me pain or ease
 My soul perceives no real *mal* *ou* *point*,
 In ease or health no real good she sees

One good she covets, and that good alone,
 To choose thy will, from selfish bias free,
 And to prefer a cottage to a throne
 And grief to comfort, if it pleases thee

That we should bear the cross is thy command,
 Die to the world, and live to self no more,
 Suffer, unmoved, beneath the rudest hand,
 As pleased when shipwreck'd as when safe on shore.

REPOSE IN GOD.

Blest! who, far from all mankind,
 This world's shadows left behind,
 Hears from heaven a gentle strain
 Whispering love, and loves again

Blest! who free from self-esteem,
 Dives into the Great Supreme,
 All desire beside discards,
 Joys inferior none regards

Blest! who in thy bosom seeks
 Rest that nothing earthly breaks,
 Dead to self and worldly things,
 Lost in thee, thou King of kings!

Ye that know my secret fire,
 Softly speak and soon retire,
 Favour my divine repose,
 Spare the sleep a God bestows.

GLORY TO GOD ALONE

Oh loved! but not enough—though dearest far
 Than self and its most loved enjoyments are,
 None duly love thee, but who, nobly free
 From sensual objects, finds his all in thee

Glory of God! thou stranger here below,
 Whom man nor knows, nor feels a wish to know;
 Our faith and reason are both shock'd to find
 Man in the post of honour—Thee behind.

Reason exclaims—"Let every creature fall,
 Ashamed, abased, before the Lord of all,"
 And faith, o'erwhelm'd with such a dazzling blaze,
 Feebly describes the beauty she surveys

Yet man, dim-sighted man, and rash as blind,
Deaf to the dictates of his better mind,
In frantic competition dares the skies,
And claims precedence of the Only Wise

Oh lost in vanity, till once self-known !
Nothing is great, or good, but God alone ,
When thou shalt stand before his awful face,
Then, at the last, thy pride shall know his place

Glorious, Almighty, First, and without end !
When wilt thou melt the mountains and descend ?
When wilt thou shoot abroad thy conquering rays,
And teach these atoms thou hast made, thy praise ?

Thy glory is the sweetest heaven I feel ,
And if I seek it with too fierce a zeal,
Thy love, triumphant o'er a selfish will,
Taught me the passion, and inspires it still

My reason, all my faculties, unite,
To make thy glory their supreme delight,
Forbid it, fountain of my brightest days,
That I should rob thee, and usurp thy praise !

My soul ! rest happy in thy low estate,
Nor hope, nor wish, to be esteem'd or great ,
To take the impression of a will divine,
Be that thy glory, and those riches thine

Confess him righteous in his just decrees,
Love what he loves, and let his pleasure please ,
Die daily , from the touch of sin recede,
Then thou hast crown'd him, and he reigns indeed.

SELF-LOVE AND TRUTH INCOMPATIBLE

From thorny wilds a monster came,
That fill'd my soul with fear and shame ,
The birds, forgetful of their mirth,
Droop'd at the sight, and fell to earth ,
When thus a Sage address'd mine ear.
Himself unconscious of a fear
"Whence all this terror and surprise,
Distracted looks, and streaming eyes ?

Far from the world and its affairs,
The joy it boasts, the pain it shares,
Surrender, without guile or art,
To God an undivided heart,
The savage form, so fear'd before,
Shall scare your trembling soul no more ;
For, loathsome as the sight may be,
'Tis but the love of self you see
Fix all your love on God alone,
Choose but his will, and hate your own
No fear shall in your path be found,
The dreary waste shall bloom around,
And you, through all your happy days,
Shall bless his name, and sing his praise "

Oh lovely solitude, how sweet
The silence of this calm retreat !
Here Truth, the fair whom I pursue,
Gives all her beauty to my view ;
The simple, unadorn'd display
Charms every pain and fear away
O Truth, whom millions proudly slight,
O Truth, my treasure and delight
Accept this tribute to thy name,
And this poor heart from which it came !

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

(Page 14.)—*Ode to Miss Macartney*

I am now convinced that, in following Southey and the other Editors of Cowper, I have given a wrong inscription to this Ode, the title should be—*To Miss ———, on reading the Prayer for Indifference*. The letter of Hayley to Mr Johnson (*Life of Hayley*, by Johnson, ii 80) is quite conclusive:—"The aim of the poem is most evident—viz, to persuade a tender virgin not to be induced, by elegant verse, to form a prayer so unsuitable to her nature. I am most firmly convinced our dear graceful Cowper could never intend to address his exquisite stanzas to the *Authoress of the Ode*. In that point of view, they are not only ungraceful, but rude. Witness the following two lines:—

'Tis as tho' thou wert not a d far the strain,
Which breathes the *lux desirée*!

Could the delicate Cowper so insult the poetess? For, if addressed to her, his expression is *outré*; and would discover such a want of delicacy as in him we may fairly pronounce *impossible*. But Hayley gives a reason better than all induction in telling us that Miss Macartney was married to Mr Grenville when the Ode appeared. Theodora Cowper had said, "the stanzas were not addressed to her."





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